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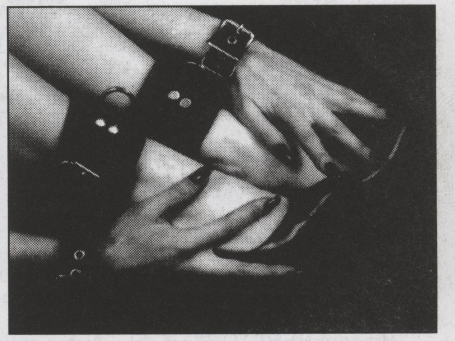

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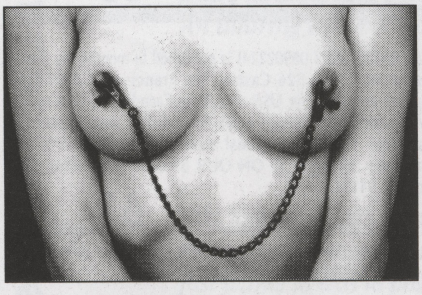

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ON OUR BACKS

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ON OUR BACKS (ISSN 08902224) is published bi-monthly by Blush Entertainment Corp., 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114. Subscriptions are $34.95/yr USA; $42.95/yr Canada (first-class only); $59.95/yr outside USA (airmail only). Second-class postage paid at San Francisco, CA. and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ON OUR BACKS, 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114.

ADVERTISING: Rate sheet and production assistance available on request. For assistance call: 415-861-4723. National advertising Representative: CyberTech Communications.

SUBMISSIONS: Photographers' and writers' guidelines available upon request with SASE. We are not responsible for unsolicited materials sent without SASE. Allow 6–8 weeks for response.

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Elizabeth
Photographer: Zanna Noe

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

"I don't know what it is about this line of work," said the dancer who was sitting in my lap at the O'Farrell Theater, San Francisco's most chi chi stripper club, "but all the straight girls who come in here, sooner or later they're at least bi." I can't say I was surprised. Doing research with Trish Thomas for her feature article "Working Girls" confirmed my hunch that sex work is a very queer field indeed.

PHYLLIS CHRISTOPHER
The ed.

I read Joan Nestle's classic essay, "Lesbians and Prostitutes: An Historical Sisterhood," in college, but it wasn't until I came to work at On Our Backs—which our publisher Debra Sundahl started with money she'd saved from being a stripper—that I realized how intertwined the lesbian and sex worker communities really are. Some of On Our Backs' most eager, talented and beautiful models and writers have been erotic dancers, dominatrixes, and whores. We try hard to return the favor: as it was put to me by Nina Hartley, a bi gal who has starred in over 500 porno movies (including Fatale's Suburban Dykes): "On Our Backs saved my life!"

This issue is chock full of lesbians who sell sex and sexual fantasy for a living. Since I got here, Lilli Xene, the drop-dead gorgeous brunette in our opening pictorial, has been taking time out from her busy schedule as an erotic model and video star to badger me—lovingly, of course—about getting in our mag. We're honored to have her and the ex-porn actress who snapped the pictures: photographer-to-watch-out-for Justice Howard. Sodomites by the Bay will recognize Rogue, our sassy cover model, who is a stripper and member of San Francisco's Safer Sex Slut team. Unless she's reached nirvana already, Annie Sprinkle (who shot the "Baby Dykes" pictorial this issue) has to be the most famous sacred prostitute on earth. Finally, Red Jordan Arobateau's gritty tale about a young hussy with a taste for butches rounds out our cast of working girls.

Add the rest, especially Nicola Ginzler's smart Sexpoint on placing a personal ad (big surprise: it turns out that writing the darn thing might be the most erotic part of the experience), and Dyke TV's Susan Musca's interview with Playboy non-fiction editor Dorothy Atcheson, and you've got one hot issue.

A good issue in which—alas—to say good-bye. Along with Bonnie Simon, our very talented art director who blew our minds last year with some fantastic new designs, I am leaving On Our Backs. I will miss the staff here more than I can imagine, and I will miss my connection with On Our Backs' readers even more. In the future, I do hope I will have the privilege of gracing these familiar pages again. Until then,

Heather Findlay
Editor

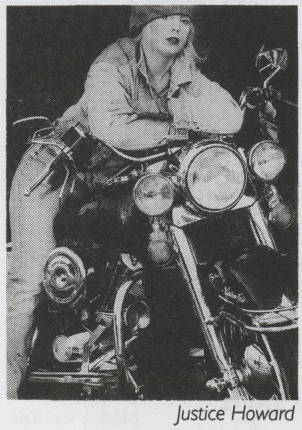
CONTRIBUTORS

Trish Thomas is a fairly studly white trash bar dyke who writes the way she talks. She's compiling a book of interviews that she's written about folks on the fringe for *Future Sex*, *SF Weekly*, and *On Our Backs*. She's also writing a novel called *Boy Crazy*.

Nicola Ginzler's latest thrill was performing for the LeatherFest at the Stonewall celebration in New York. Nicola is a San Francisco-based writer, artist and performer. She has a big, big scar.

Susan Musca is a producer at Dyke TV in New York City.

Red Jordan Arobateau has written over 40 novels that chronicle ethnically diverse, working class lesbian life from the 1950's on. Her books—including *Dirty Pictures*, *Satan's Best* and *Outlaws*—are described as hard hitting, gritty and realistic.


Justice Howard

As a photographer, **Christina Lenz** explores colors, textures and sensuality in every moment. Her work includes travel photography, character studies, erotica and fashion.

After five years modeling for magazines from *Playboy* to *National Lampoon*, **Justice Howard** is now a full time photographer. Her shows, including "Rated X" in NYC, have won Howard the title of "the female Mapplethorpe."

Arlyn Tobias Gajilan is a freelance writer living in San Francisco. She is also the Program Coordinator for the Asian American Journalists Association and a board member for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation/San Francisco Bay Area.

P.J. Walker

Louise Rafkin is a writer/self-defense and karate instructor who has four books including *Different Mothers*, *Different Daughters*, and *Queer and Pleasant Danger*. She is negotiating a contract for a new book on personal safety.

P.J. Walker is a 42 year old lesbian mental health professional. Her work has also appeared in *Bad Attitude*.

Ellen Forney

Ellen Forney, whose work was featured in the May/June '94 issue of *On Our Backs*, is a cartoonist/illustrator living in Seattle. Her work has appeared in numerous magazines and newpapers, including *Ms.*, *The Stranger* and *The Rocker*. Her new comic book *Tomato* is currently available in comic book stores nationwide.

Elizabeth Clarke danced at the dyke-friendly Lusty Lady Theatre in San Francisco as Rogue. Currently, she is working on an M.F.A. in fiction writing at the University of Virginia. A short story, "Queer", will appear this summer in the anthology *Fever* (ed. Michele Slung).

Margarita

Margarita was born in El Salvador, October 31, 1966. Currently she is working as a freelance photographer within the music and publishing industries. Her hobbies are work, and traveling to get more work. She has lived in Miami and Washington, DC, and now resides in the San Francisco Bay area.

LICK LEA'S CHOPS

A big pat on the butt for the Lea Delaria interview [Nov/Dec '93]. Many, even in our own community, squirm at her in-your-face act. There is room for us all. Isn't that what diversity means? Stop dividing—that's the right's real agenda. Lea, we have some things in common. Now as for your not getting laid—I'll be moving to the San Francisco bay area in the fall. You check with *On Our Backs* then. A little candlelight, assume your favorite position and pork chops will be on the grill.

GirlPearlieQ
Chicago, IL

DEPEND ON THIS!

"Dear Fanny,

Re: "Need a Wet Suit" [Jan/Feb '94]. Yes, my partner and I also tried the towels and got tired of all the laundry we were doing. We found a practical solution to the female ejaculation overflow and abundance.

Underpads. This is an example of a small generic brand. We prefer Depend© Bed Size Underpads (23"X36"). Ask for them at your local drugstore or super market. Because of the plastic backing, they don't soak through like towels."

Ebb & Flow
La Mesa, CA

(Note: This letter was written on a Depend© Bed Size Underpad! Fanny says, "Thanks for the tip. I tried it out and the ink from the letter didn't even smear when wet!")

GOOD LESBIAN GOODS

I'm a New Jersey dyke who really loves your mag. You can't get any good lesbian goods unless you drive into New York. It's 1/2 hour away but dangerous for me to go over the bridge, because of four day binges. NYC is a party place, and I must be careful! So, I'm glad my co-worker brought me an issue several months ago. I love everything about your mag. Thank god for *On Our Backs*. Love in Sisterhood,

Cindy
Newark, NJ

TRANSTHANKFUL

THANK YOU! Thank you very much for speaking out for those of us who are transsexual. I really appreciated your response to "Feeling Jilted and Eating Oreos" [ed.'s note, Letters, Jan/Feb '94]. The Jan/Feb issue was my first exposure to *On Our Backs*, I can't wait to receive the next ones.

Koriana ni Kayara
Bothell, WA

PASS THE REMOTE

I was hoping you wouldn't do what you did. But, that's cool, because I'll get over it in time. Your article on Fem2Fem [Jan/Feb] was, in my eyes, less than necessary. A bunch of out-of-work supermodels trying to come off as a lesbian techno sensation seems a little weak to me. And trying to educate the straight community through *Playboy*? For starters, I don't think that those who buy *Playboy* are looking for education. I can't see as "progression" a group of models (half of whom aren't even gay) trying to represent the dyke community in hopes of educating the ignorant.

But the review of Tribe 8 (the most beautiful and intelligent dyke band ever) was excellent. Now if you can get those girls to shed some clothing and pose for your zine, my first born is yours.

Angela
Amherst, MA

CHRISTINA LENZ

WE RECRUIT, BUT NOT ENOUGH

Great issue for Valentine's Day, especially the safer sex piece ["Coming to Safer Sex," Jan/Feb '94]. Just to add to Fanny's response to "Lonely in Wisconsin": I knew I was a lesbian long before I was sexual with a woman. How? I'd been with men and though the sex was okay, I never found myself emotionally involved or really turned on. In contrast, I fell for the first out lesbian I knew in my early twenties. Alas, it was an unrequited deal; for one thing she was terrified to "bring [me] out."

I placed a personal around my 24th birthday. At this point I was calling myself bisexual. I met a woman visiting from San Francisco, who showed her interest when she drove me home. I was terrified she'd reject me if I told her I was sexually inexperienced with women. She couldn't tell (I'm proud to say) but then I hadn't told the first man I fucked either.

My first girl and I had a fabulous two-week affair (in the dead of winter) before she went back to San Francisco. Too many dykes run when they hear it's a girl's first time—only adding to the painful shyness and isolation "LM" spoke of in her letter.

P.S. What's with the poorly fitting gloves in some of the photos? Unsexy.

Sign me—Bodacious in Boston
Boston, MA

On Our Backs invites letters and comments from our readers. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length. All letters must be signed, although names will be withheld at the author's request.

DOROTHY ATCHESON

Playboy's Lesbian Editor

GRÉTA OLAFSDOTTIR

Dorothy (R), her lover and their dog.

I've had to justify reading Playboy by claiming that the writing is good, the interviews are great, I agree with its anti-censorship pro-sex philosophy, and I get a kick out of the hetero male sex advice. But the truth is I read Playboy *because it's a thrill for me to be a dyke reading the quintessential straight man's porn mag—especially in a public place. I read* Playboy *because it does the porn thing for me; it excites me by letting me be a spy in another house of love.*

Last fall at the Gay and Lesbian Journalists' Conference in New York, I met Dorothy Atcheson, a literary editor at Playboy *who is also an out lesbian. I later interviewed her (first for Dyke TV, then again for* On Our Backs*) in her cozy office decorated with very out dyke paraphernalia, including woman to woman safe sex posters, photos of her girlfriend Tieds and her dog Zippy, and a press still of Shelly Mars with a strap on taped behind her computer.*

SM: How did you end up working at *Playboy*?

DA: I knew the fiction editor at *Playboy* and I called her to see if she knew of any magazine jobs. She said there was actually a job at *Playboy*. I wasn't thinking of working there; I was laughing on the way to the interview because I couldn't believe that I was seriously considering going there. [But] soon after I walked in I started to take it very seriously.

SM: Oh?

DA: I had just come from a very corporate environment. I even wore a suit to the [*Playboy*] interview and the guy who came out was wearing jeans and a T-shirt. When he took me into the conference room to interview me he put his feet up on the coffee table and his hands behind his head. [Soon] I was thinking, "Well, this is kind of a cool job... the people were fun, they were really smart, and I always liked the idea of working with sexual material."

SM: When was your first exposure to *Playboy* and your subsequent impression of it?

DA: Apart from reading my brother's *Playboys* all through growing up, sort of subversively, for any kind of pornography I could find, I hadn't looked at it in a while. My father was the movie critic for *Playboy* in the sixties, and my parents met at *Playboy*, so in a way I'm a *Playboy* child and I've come back, by fate.

SM: How do you feel about the way women are portrayed in *Playboy*?

DA: I used to get upset with my brother's *Playboys*. I'd leaf through and I'd wish the pictures turned me on but they didn't, so I turned to *Penthouse* where I'd find stories that worked.

Today I don't take the pictures in *Playboy* all that seriously. On some level I think that men's sexual tastes are very simplistic. I just see the pics for the formula that they are. I don't feel oppressed by them; it's not what I look for in other women, [and] it's not what I'm interested in looking like. It was when I was a teenager, so my therapist thinks it's interesting that I wound up at *Playboy*.

SM: Do you consider what you do a form of sex work?

DA: No, in the sense that most of what I do every day is read non-fiction books and articles, and excerpt them. But so much of the magazine does deal with sex, [and] to the extent I'm working at a place that brings people access to sex and sexual material—maybe I am a sex worker. But I think I'm more of an editor like I would be an editor at any magazine.

SM: How did you come out at *Playboy*?

DA: It just so happened that the woman I was dating was on the cover of *Outweek* with a few other people, so I seized this opportunity to go into my boss's office and say, "Look, this is the girl I'm dating. She's on the cover of *Outweek*!" He maintains that he didn't act surprised because he had wondered already if I might be gay. He went around and showed everybody in the office, "Hey this is Dorothy's girlfriend!" Before I knew it he was throwing the word lesbian around the office left and right, probably to feel comfortable with it himself.

My father was the movie critic for *Playboy* in the sixties, and my parents met at *Playboy*, so in a way I'm a *Playboy* child.

SM: Do you think that your presence there as an out lesbian has had an effect on content or the pictorials in *Playboy*?

DA: I had nothing to do with that Fem2Fem pictorial. That came out of the Los Angeles office. At that point they didn't even know who I was, let alone that I was an out lesbian. [But] I have fought to get articles about gay people and by gay people into the magazine. In the case of the Paul Monnet article, "Can Gays and Straights be Friends?" I really fought for that. I was subversive about it. I went over an editor's head who had said no, and took it to a person above him because I believed in it so much. [And] I really pushed for doing the Larry Kramer interview.

SM: What about Hugh Hefner's rumored bisexuality? Is that reflected in *Playboy*'s philosophy?

DA: What Hugh Hefner says in the *Advocate* interview is stuff that I've been saying: that gay freedom and sexual freedom are completely intertwined. His having slept with men at times when he was swinging was not so much about him being gay or straight, but about being sexually adventurous. The Playboy Foundation has given money to the Gay and Lesbian Task Force, we funded a lot of the preliminary stuff for Roe v. Wade...*Playboy* is incredibly liberal in its embracing of women's and gay issues, for an institution marketing to straight men.

SM: Has your exposure to the straight male mentality made straight porn any more accessible erotically for you?

DA: One of the guys at work told me he thought I envied men or I was in awe of male sexuality, and I think it's really true. From the earliest time I had penis envy. I always wanted to have a penis, and I think I've always partly wished I was a boy. I have no trouble getting off on men's sexuality. To this day I find gay male videos the biggest turn on.

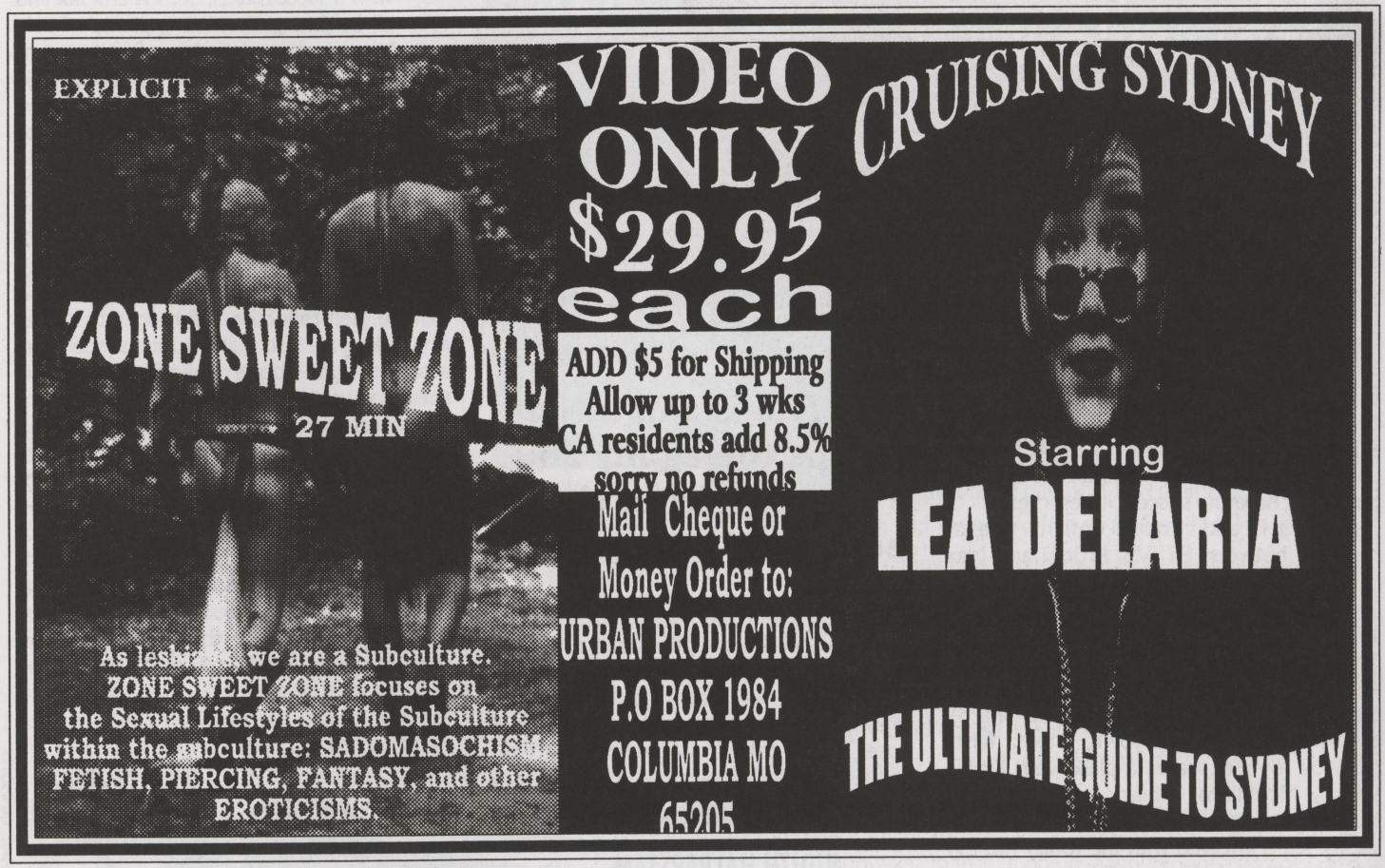
SM: Any negative reactions from lesbians about working at *Playboy*?

DA: I still expect lesbians to get mad at me for working for *Playboy*, but it's less for what *Playboy* represents and more, how could I work for men putting out images for men? Shouldn't I be working at putting out images for women instead?

SM: Answer that question.

DA: Well, yeah, I'd like to be. I guess I just don't see the ways to do it. I've got to pay my bills. In a way this experience is probably preparing me for the great pornographer I'll soon become. ❖

SUSAN MUSCA



SLIPPERY WHEN WET

Go *Fish* and Other Lesbian Fish Films

The creative team of Go Fish: *Rose Troche, producer/director/writer; V.S. Brodie, star; Guinevere Turner, producer/star/writer.*

An unlikely theme emerged from the lesbian features at this year's International San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival: fish. The common associations between fish and female sexuality—specifically female genitalia—may not sound like promising material for lesbian cinema. But stay tuned. The fish theme actually pays off.

The most exciting lesbian fish film (yes, it is a genre) of the season is the newly released black and white lesbian feature film *Go Fish* directed by Rose Troche and written by Troche and Guinevere Turner. Troche and Turner made this film on a shoestring budget in Chicago where they used equipment from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Illinois. The cast and crew worked for free. After a rough cut of the film was shown at a benefit, Tom Kalin (director of *Swoon*) and Christine Vachon (producer of *Swoon* and *Poison*) signed on as executive producers. *Go Fish* was a hit at this year's Sundance Festival and has been signed for distribution by Samuel Goldwyn. In other words, this is a queer, uncompromised lesbian feature film that might have the success it deserves.

Go Fish is a distinctly unfishy tale of romance between Eli (V.S. Brody) and Max (played by Turner). Eli is a shy assistant veterinarian, an awkward wanna-be butch who steers clear of emotional involvements and gets her vicarious thrills instead through the sexual conquests of her house mate and "lesbian about town" Daria (Anastasia Sharp). Meanwhile, just across town, Max, a feisty could-be femme, shares a place with Kia (T. Wendy McMillan), a black professor who teaches gay and lesbian studies at a local university. Kia is involved with the totally hot Evy (Migdalia Melendez) who still lives at home.

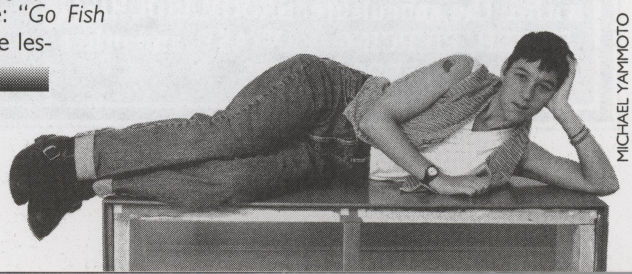
As you can tell already, this film begins right in the thick of things. As a result, *Go Fish* does not cater to a mainstream audience; it

Go *Fish* is a film that skips the agony and gets right to the ecstasy of being queer.

is a film by, about and for lesbians. There are no long-winded explanations about who lesbians are, what they do, or how they got that way. This is a film that skips the agony and gets right to the ecstasy of being queer. As Rose Troche told *The Advocate*: "*Go Fish* isn't a film about coming out. The lesbians in the film know who they are; they just don't know where they are going to get some."

So how about that fish theme? On some level of *Go Fish*, "fish" does refer to lesbian sex. We have various discussions about what women taste like, and plenty of heated debate about pussy: how to find it, what to do with it, and what to call it (honey pot, cunt, twat?). "Fish" also refers to the complicated art of lesbian dating, especially in Daria's case, for whom "going fishing" is a nightly ritual that always seems to end with a successful catch. When Max and Eli go fishing, they bring plenty of bait, but are forced to be infinitely more patient. Finally, the old card game "go fish" makes a number of appearances, suggesting the elements of luck, chance and gambling that underwrite all of the best romantic exploits.

Go Fish beautifully handles its love story, never rushing into it, never spoiling it with saccharine sentimentality, never building it up as the love to end all love. Self-reflective references to queer film-making are also built into the script: characters disagree about queer films they have seen and discuss what they expect from queer features. Troche, moreover, pulls us in and out of the main story line by breaks in the action that feature the film makers wondering about which direction to take the plot. Finally, Troche adds beautiful experimental touches to the film, including a dream sequence and a series of shots of hands caught in various poses. The hand shots are particularly effective: they emphasize the expressive and sexual nature of hands in the



MICHAEL YAMMOTO

JUDITH HALBERSTAM

context of lesbian sex. Hands, in this film, are a primary sexual organ.

And how was the sex, you ask? I would have to say that the climactic sex scene between Max and Eli rates as one of the best lesbian sex scenes in cinema. It's so good that—to make reference once again to the fish thang—you can almost smell it. By the time Eli and Max do it, Eli has chopped off her long hair and donned a suave butch outfit. Max has freed her hair from beneath her baseball cap and greets Eli in a flowing bathrobe. The sex scene that follows was shot to capture both the initial clumsiness of any sexual encounter and the heat generated by built up, unrequited desire. The scene also departs from the formulaic lesbian oral sex scene—look out for serious tribadism, breast play and implied fucking.

Other recently-released films and videos featuring that ubiquitous fish theme include *Sex Fish* by E.T. Baby Maniac and *Fresh Kill* by Shu Lea Cheang. In the experimental collaborative video *Sex Fish*, "E.T." (a.k.a. Ela Troyanor, a New York based, Cuban-born film maker whose short film *Carmelita Tropicana* also played in this year's S.F. festival) "Baby," (Jane Castle, who has worked with Jane Campion), and "Maniac" (Shu Lea Cheang, who also directed *Fresh Kill)* have put together an extraordinary six minute tape that floods the viewer with images of lesbian sex shot through a variety of transparent barriers such as glass, shower curtains and water. This tape puts lesbian sex into a fish bowl; indeed, there are plenty of shots of brightly colored fish swimming through the wet landscape of lesbian desire.

Fresh Kill switches gears on the fish theme by making fish into a symbol of environmental pollution. The slightly scattered plot of *Fresh Kill* tells a tale of urban decay by focusing upon the lives of a multi-racial lesbian couple Shareen Lightfoot (played by Sarita Choudhury of *Mississippi Masala*) and Claire Mayakovsky (Erin McMurtry), and their daughter Honey. Shareen works in an upscale Sushi restaurant where the house special is "fish lips soup." When, after eating this delicacy, the customers begin to glow, we realize that the fish symbolize a pervasive, circulating contamination. A homeless man selling condoms and poems on the street makes yet another connection for the viewer, this time between sushi and unsafe sex: the raw fish lips, like sex in the raw, kiss to kill.

Other lesbian fish films to look out for: the San Francisco produced *Jellyfish Kiss* and the French melodrama *Something Fishy* (the French title is *Pas Tres Catholique* which, obviously, does not mean "something fishy"—perhaps the film's American distributors are trying to squeeze into the new genre). From pussy to sushi, fish are taking lesbian images into the mainstream. As this year's fine pool of fish films confirms, lesbian cinema can be exciting, poignant, relevant, steamy, and very, very, wet. Go figure. ❖

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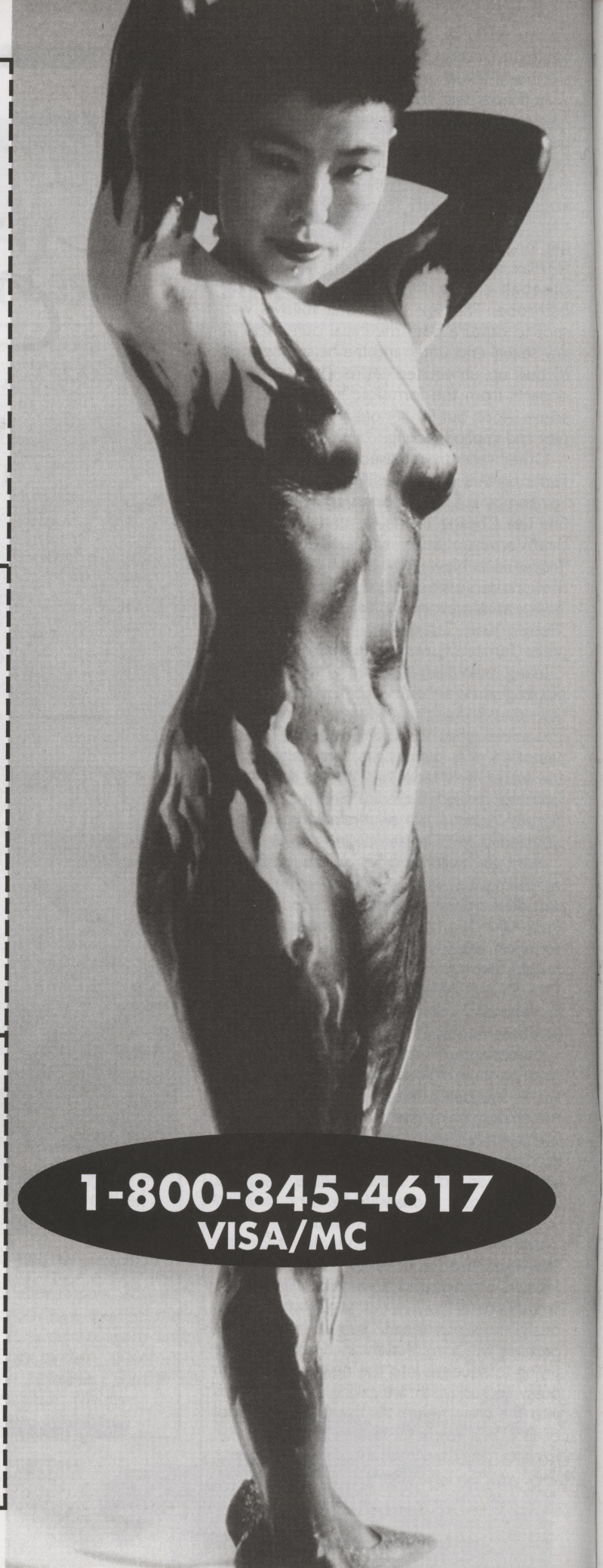

Frameline congratulates
Rose Troche
and everyone involved in the production of

go fish

GO FISH is one of the most exciting and successful independent lesbian films ever made. In 1992, **GO FISH** was also a recipient of **Frameline's Film & Video Completion Fund**, established to help lesbian and gay film and videos reach the screen. Each year, the fund gives new and struggling makers up to $6000. The Fund is administered by Frameline, the Bay Area non-profit dedicated to promoting lesbian and gay media arts. You can help create **the next lesbian hit** by making a donation to the 1994 Film & Video Completion Fund. For any donation over $35, we'll also make you a Frameline member — giving you the chance to be first in line at next year's **San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.**

Yes, I want to help bring lesbian movies to the screen. Here's my donation to the **1994 Frameline Film & Video Completion Fund:**

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ON OUR BACKS keeps you up-to-date with the latest sex-related news and gossip, and informed about the wave of censorship threatening free expression in the U.S. and worldwide. As different as *On Our Backs* may be from mainstream pornography, we are allies in the struggle against censorship and the anti-pornography movement. So you can keep reading this magazine and other "subversive" materials, take a stand. Be informed. Fight sexual ignorance and censorship.

Lesbians on the Racks

According to ***Newsweek***, last year's "lesbian issue" sold better than any other issue in the history of the magazine. It's no surprise, then, that February's ***Esquire*** featured several lesbian and bi women in its article on the "**21st-Century Woman**." And what characteristics will this brave new dame embody? According to *Esquire*, she is: goddess, riot grrrl, philosopher-queen, lipstick lesbian, and "leader of men." Also included were interviews with **Susie Bright**, black feminist professor **bell hooks**, author **Pat Califia**, and baby butch activist **Rebecca Walker**—the daughter of Alice—who is quoted saying, "Feminism is the tool everyone should have, right next to the dildo." In the accompanying survey of 1,000 women, 59.3% said lesbianism is "an acceptable choice." Top choices for a bedmate? Madonna (34%), Jodie Foster (17.7%), Jessica Lange (8.1%), k.d. lang (4.5%) and Martina Navratilova (2.7%).

Roseanne Kisses Playmate

Playboy's February "Safe Sex Pictorial" featured several queer-friendly celebrities posing for free, and Playboy is donating $100,000 to the **American Foundation for AIDS Research** (AmFar). Among the women featured are **Kelly Lynch** (the stunning butch from Three of Hearts), **Jenny Schimuzo** (the runway model rumored to be Madonna's latest girl toy, and who has a "Strap-On" tattoo of a woman straddling an 8" wrench) and **Mimi Rogers** (who poses with a female "friend"). **Mariel Hemingway** is also pictured, but her Playboy appearance caused less of a stir than the kiss she gave **Roseanne Arnold** on the latter's popular ABC sitcom. Inspired by a trip to a lesbian bar, the Hemingway-Arnold smooch lasted only a few seconds, but ABC threatened up until the last minute to censor it, claiming that "[lesbianism] is not a lifestyle that most people lead." Local television stations in **Pocatello** and **Twin Falls, Idaho**, Hemingway's native state, refused to air the "controversial" episode.

Lesbian Best-Seller Comes to Life

Mary Louis Parker, the fabulous femme from *Fried Green Tomatoes* and *Longtime Companion*, promises to up her status as a lesbian heartthrob with her lead role in the upcoming movie ***Murder at the Nightwood Bar.*** Based on **Naiad**'s best-selling lesbian detective novel by **Katherine Forrest**, *Murder* will be co-scripted by *On Our Backs*' contributing illustrator **Jennifer Camper**, and will star Parker as Kate Delafield and **Tom Arnold** as Detective Ed Taylor. Parker is currently starring alongside **Whoopie Goldberg** and **Drew Barrymore** in ***Boys on the Side***, an upcoming movie that chronicles an HIV-positive woman's cross country adventure. Goldberg, incidentally, plays a lesbian lounge singer.

Dyke Punk Goes Bananas

At a punk performance space in **Berkeley, Calif.**, a town long known for its tolerance and freedom of expression, singer/performer **Marian Anderson** was arrested for indecent exposure, lewd conduct and obscenity during a concert with her band the **Insaints**. A former punk rock musician and born again Christian was in the audience, and called the police claiming that his "heterosexual rights" were being threatened by Anderson's performance. Anderson allegedly stripped down to a vest, garters and stockings, and engaged in sex acts on-stage with other women. Berkeley police also claim Anderson inserted a banana into her vagina. The **Northern California American Civil Liberties Union** is defending Anderson's right to address sexual politics in her work.

Washington: No More Dyke Moms

A recently filed anti-gay initiative in **Washington** targets lesbian and gay parents with unprecedented vigor, prohibiting them from becoming foster parents, adopting children, or gaining custody in a divorce. According to the **Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition International**, mainstream media reports have overlooked the most disturbing clause of the initiative, which states that upon dissolution of a marriage where one of the parents is gay or lesbian, the other parent automatically receives custody. If both parents are gay, custody will be awarded to the nearest non-gay relative. If no such person exists, children will be taken from their parents and placed in foster care or put up for adoption. Queer

Washingtonians are reacting strongly: "Listening to the news on the radio, I was nauseated," says **Pat Justis**, an **Olympia**, Washington mother and member of **Out on a L.I.M.B.** (Lesbians in Maternity and Beyond). "I am still shell-shocked...Having a child puts a fire in your belly. This is not a battle where I can sit back, there's too much at stake for my son."

DOUGLASS KENT HALL

Portia de Rossi, Elle MacPherson and Kate Fischer in John Duigan's SIRENS.

Family Attorney takes Leather Title

Anne Bergstedt, an attorney specializing in family law, is the **1994 International Ms. Leather** (IMsL). Bergstedt is the first Ms. Leather candidate in several years from **Washington** to participate in the IMsL competition, which was held in **San Francisco** and featured eleven contestants from across the **United States** and **Canada**. Bergstedt promises to promote the issues she's held dear since she won the Washington state title: women's health and civil rights for all people. "We have a tough political year, not just in Washington State, but around the country," said Bergstedt. "My mission is to bring [these issues to] light wherever I go." One of the title holder's first achievements was to raffle off her own motorcycle—a Yamaha Virago 750—during the **Washington State Mr. Leather Contest**. Proceeds of over $2,000 went to **Hands off Washington** and the **May Day '94** celebration.

Anatomy of a Crush

Back by popular demand, ***The Dyke and the Porn Star*** is selling out to late night lesbian theater-goers in **San Francisco.** A wry look at modern lesbian romance, the play stars **Lisi DeHaas** (as actress Tara Gold) and **Allison Hennessy** (as Tara's fan Chance), and addresses what transgender activist and performance artist Kate Bornstein calls "one aspect of being a lesbian they don't tell you about in *Our Bodies, Our Selves*: the not-so-nice phenomenon of obsession." *The Dyke and the Porn Star* was written by a clever new playwright **Bayla Travis**, and directed by **Cintra Wilson**.

The Dyke and the Porn Star

No Clemency for Dyke-Killer

The U.S. **Supreme Court** voted to uphold a death sentence for the man who raped and killed **Laura Luebbenhusen,** a lesbian in **Evansville, Indiana.** Last year, convicted killer **Thomas Schiro** knocked on Luebbenhusen's door, told her his car broke down, and asked to use her telephone. A bizarre conversation then occurred: claiming he was queer, Schiro told Luebbenhusen his buddies bet him he couldn't have sex with a woman. When Luebbenhusen replied she was a lesbian and wasn't interested, he assaulted and raped her several times. Schiro confessed to the assault, but argued that he did not "knowingly" kill Luebbenhusen. Defense attorneys, moreover, claimed that Luebbenhusen "willingly participated" because she found time to leave a note warning her lover not to enter the house. Despite several appeals, the Supreme Court voted 7-2 to uphold his sentence. Justices Harry Blackmun and John Paul Stevens dissented.

Elle Makes Sirens Sing

Elle MacPherson is finally showing her true colors. Having dumped her ***Sports Illustrated*** swimsuit and gained an extra 20 pounds, the voluptuous cover model made her screen debut in the homoerotic film ***Sirens***. MacPherson plays Sheela, a model for the free-thinking Australian artist Norman Lindsay. Complete with lush scenery and sapphic-tribadic rituals involving **Kate Fisher** and **Portia de Rossi**, *Sirens* offers bi gals the best of both worlds: MacPherson is in the buff throughout most of the movie, *and* there's a hot frontal nudity scene with a hunky handyboy played by **Mark Gerber**.

Travails of the City

If you were one of millions who stayed glued to the tube for the **Public Broadcasting Service**'s (PBS) made-for-TV version of **Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City***, you will be disappointed to know that PBS has canceled its plans to run ***More Tales of the City***, a sequel to the campy, queer and bellbottom-stocked series. Although *Tales* was among the highest rated programs ever distributed by the network, PBS president (and former **George Bush** lackey) **Ervin Duggan** announced that PBS couldn't afford a second go; insiders, though, charge that the new CEO aims to suppress programming that "Americans find distasteful"—specifically shows that deal with lesbian and gay themes or abortion.

DIANE ANDERSON

HOW TO WRITE YOUR *Very Own Sex Ad*

So you wanna get laid.

Not laid any old way, either. Laid just the way you like it. Being a red-blooded card-carrying lesbian with your hormones in overdrive, you always cruise the personals. But all of them seem the same, and none is exactly what you're looking for. "Gosh," you say at last, "maybe I should place my *own* ad..." A little-known fact is that placing ads can actually be fun. Putting into words exactly what blows your dress up—501s, Guatemalan pants, whatever—is something anyone can learn to do. Honest. All it takes is practice.

First and foremost, figure out what you want.

After you've saved yourself some hassle by finding a publication that already carries sex ads (particularly if you're planning on making yours explicit), get together with a friend (or several) and write ads with each other. Write ads *for* each other. Encourage each other to actually ***send the ads in***—this can be a sticky point for many people doing it on their own.

Figuring out what you want can be difficult and scary. As we all know from Feminism 101, women aren't really supposed to want sex at all. But for a better sex ad—and a better sex life—practice wanting!

This absolutely does not have to be some dreary academic exercise. Practicing wanting is what you're doing every time you fantasize. What do you think about when you come? Beforehand? Afterwards? Got an image or a nice warm feeling starting somewhere? Good. Get a pencil and some paper, and let's practice putting it into words.

Be specific. If you write in detail about what you actually want, there's a much better chance that your ad will sound like there's a real person behind it. A lot of women, for instance, enjoy candlelit dinners or walks on the beach before, during or after sex, so saying this in your ad is not going to give that special girl out there a sense of your unique

> **9-1/2 Weeks still makes me crazy! Does it you too? Female with endurance, high pleasure tolerance, desired for off-screen sequel. (Must own hat). #7051 (exp.05/11).** ☎

desires. Yes, this requires more thinking, but hey, girls who can think are ***sexy***.

Think about your dream sex-date. What would it be like? Quick fuck? Long, slow fuck? Intense, vicious S/M scene? Sweet, tender S/M scene? Naked sweaty humping? Just a cuddle? Re-enacting the hotel scene from ***Salmonberries*** the way it ***should*** have gone? Write everything down.

What are you looking for in a respondent, in addition to complementary sexual desires? A certain background or values? A certain placement on the butch/femme continuum? A certain body type that just gets you goin', every time? Certain articles of black leather clothing or equipment? A certain ethnicity? Make notes, and remember, being specific is very important here too.

And oh yeah: set out to have fun.

If you write your ad in a state of despair or grim determination, it will probably show, and your ad may well attract the sort of ladies who thrive on such things. I've found that it helps if I don't take it too seriously, and try to remember why I'm going to all this trouble in the first place: to get laid just the way I like it.

Now you're ready to start writing for real. If you can think of a catchy headline, go for it. If you can't, look at your notes and pick out the most important thing you're looking for. Try starting with "I want someone to _____ with, to, on, etc., me."

Starting your sentences with active verbs like "I want" will help you stay more specific than starting them with static ones like "I am." And detailed descriptions are better than shorthand. For example, "I want to feel your short, thick hair between my fingers, k.d., and the perfect smoothness of your skin as I run my tongue along your jawline," as opposed to "I am a very sensually-oriented person. There's this Canadian I find rather attractive."

Say things that are true. Don't say things that aren't.

This is so obvious that it may need to be said explicitly. If your heart's desire is languorous caressing with nary an objectification in sight, "TAKE ME HOME AND MAKE ME LIKE IT" is probably not the headline you want. And if what you crave beyond reason is to be tied to the bed and fucked silly, you owe it to yourself not to say you're looking for "FRIENDSHIP—OR WHATEVER DEVELOPS...."

The headline should convey or introduce your main point. Think of the rest of your ad as a little story you're writing to seduce a potential lover. String a couple of sentences together (the "I want..." ones are good to start with). Try varying the words you use: "I want" is great, but what about "I crave" or "I desire" or "I lie awake at night aching for" or "I demand" or "I will crawl on my hands and knees through gravel for a glimpse of"?

Put that really revealing part in, I dare you. If you need to stop and take some special alone time at this point, you're probably on the right track. By the way:three little words,

NICOLA GINZLER

"safer sex only," are a great way to get your feelings about this very important topic out in the open.

When you have something on paper, read it out loud.

If you're feeling really brave, show it to a friend and ask for suggestions. Your friend can also provide a useful reality check about how effective and appealing the ad is.

Don't get too tangled up in the wording. The most important thing is to say what you really mean. Honesty can be extraordinarily sexy!

Now that you have your ad, take a deep breath and send it in to the publication of your choice. Most publications that carry personal ads have reply mailboxes available, and sometimes they will forward mail to you for an extra fee. Or you can get a P.O. box for

for a better sex ad—
and a better sex life—
practice wanting

replies if you don't want smutty letters forwarded to your home address.

These days many places offer voicemail. Voicemail scared the crap out of me when it first became available. A big plus in having a voicemail box, though, is that interested parties may be less intimidated about responding, and they can check out your voice before they leave a message.

If you go with voicemail, avoid simply reading your written ad into the phone. A fine and easy option is to say "Hi, the headline of my ad reads SUCK MY BIG DYKE DICK, BABY [or whatever]. If this interests you, tell me why. Please leave me your name, phone number, and a good time to call. Also, let me know how discreet I need to be if I leave a message for you."

For your safety, don't put your name, address, phone number, or any other identifying information in the written ad or on your outgoing voicemail message. Federal law also prohibits "obscenity" recorded on an outgoing message. "Obscenity" is not clearly defined, as usual, but use common sense.

Now, sit back and wait.

Check your mailbox every day (like I need to tell you this). Perk up your day and check it from work.

If you're lucky, you'll have a bunch of women to choose from, and yes! you are allowed to choose more than one. (Don't rule out an interesting-sounding someone, by the way, because she's not exactly what you advertised for. A couple of times I've advertised for a specific kind of sex partner and found a different kind, and several times I've

(Continued on page 38)

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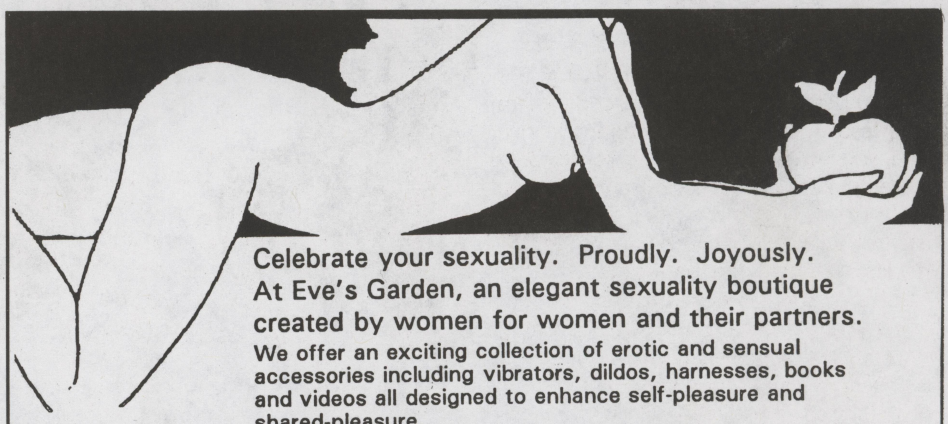

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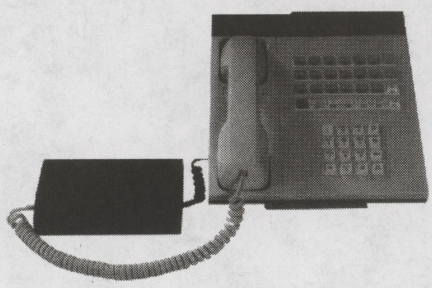

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LILLI XENE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTICE HOWARD

"A few years ago," wrote Lilli in her first correspondence to us, "[When] I was only a bondage model, I just dreamed of maybe one day being in or writing for *On Our Backs*.

"In the last two years I became a porno star but I never forgot my bonds with women. All through my struggle in the porno world I had to mainstream my look but I still insisted that I was woman identified, smart and heavily kinky."

To anyone in the sex industry, Lilli has an enviable resume. Along with her appearances in many, many porn movies (including Snatch Production's *Pussyman I and IV)*, Lilli has written extensively on the sex worker experience for magazines such as *Hustler's Erotic Video Guide* and *Reflections*. On top of all this, she has a fetish wardrobe to kill for.

Watch out Catherine MacKinnon! In Lilli's essay "Does Porn Degrade Women?" this feisty gal, who cut her activist teeth in L.A.'s Butch/Femme Network and Leather and Lace groups, fights backs against those so-called feminists who believe that sex work is the epitome of women's oppression.

"A woman's sexual purpose," Lilli writes, "was to reproduce after marriage and never to appear and act sexual.... Only women who worked in brothels or saloons experienced that side of life. Women who couldn't stand the confines of society's pressures chose this life and by doing so they rebelled and faced ostracism. They also felt freedom."

➤ To contact Lilli's fan club, please send a S.A.S.E. to 3435 Ocean Park Blvd. #206, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

Working Girls

Lesbian and Bisexual Sex Workers Tell It Like It Is

"People think when you're a prostitute you turn your body over to somebody. You don't. If you did, you'd never last. You're in control. You know exactly what you're going to do and what you're not going to do. You know what your customers are going to do. You *tell* them what to do. That's the way it works."

Denise T. was a whore in a lesbian brothel that catered to male clients in Ann Arbor, Michigan, from 1973 to 1978. It all started when a new dyke came to town and took up turning tricks out of the local Holiday Inn. She also worked at a massage parlor in Ann Arbor's one-bulb red light district. When she moved in with Denise T. and her girlfriend, she talked and they listened. It didn't take long to convince them to say "later" to their two-dollar-an-hour jobs and give whoring a try. "We were already radical, we had been for years. We had worked in SDS [Students for a Democratic Society], we were Communists, we were working with the Black Panthers, we were rioting and throwing rocks. Then we came out as lesbians and felt even more marginalized—so it wasn't a big step to be whores."

Denise T.'s first house was "one of these cheesy red velvet places. The customer walked up the stairs and the manager introduced us. The customer got to choose who he wanted. He'd buy a half hour or an hour massage, nude or topless. You'd tell him to lay on the table and you'd start massaging him. If he wanted something more, he had to ask. You didn't solicit him. If he knew what was happening he'd say, 'Do you do extras?' and you'd say, 'What are you interested in?' He might say a hand job or oral, usually that's all it was, handjobs and blowjobs. If you had any rules, like no kissing, you'd tell him that. Usually it would be done within a few minutes.

"The guy who managed the place was an asshole. We wouldn't have on many clothes when we were working and he was always bitching about the heat being on. We'd turn it up and he'd turn it down. One day he said, 'Next person turns up the heat, I'll break their arm.' We were feminists, we said forget this shit. We picketed the place. Unfair labor practices." Denise T. and her buddies went to the labor relations board, sued the massage parlor, won a little bit of money, paid their lawyer, and moved on to start their own house where they worked for five years until they got busted.

PATRICK GAGNE

Rainbeau, San Francisco

I invited a group of lesbian and bisexual sex workers over to my house for a roundtable discussion about working in the industry. I asked prostitutes, lapdancers, strippers, actresses, peepshow workers, dominants and submissives to tell me what it's really like to do what they do for a living. If what they say here surprises you, it may be because women in the industry often sugarcoat what they say about their work.

Rebecca used to work peepshows. "People I didn't even know would say, 'I heard you were a stripper,' and expect me to sit down with them for an hour and justify my work. This was my free time and I was expected to explain why it was okay that I held down the job that I held down. A lot of us end up saying more positive things about the industry than we really want to say, because the moment you say something negative, it's jumped on."

The general consensus is: If a sex worker has a bad day on the job, she deserves it. She's a bad girl in a bad business. Besides, she's making all that money, so what's she got to complain about? "We perpetuate that myth sometimes just to get people off our backs," Ann says. "'It's the money, get out of my face.' We feel like we have to pretend that [we're raking it in], like it's the only justification. If you're not loaded with the bucks, then why the fuck are you doing it. Well, I'm making more than I did as a secretary, that's why.

TRISH THOMAS

Candy Apple, San Francisco

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARGARITA

"I've got this motherfucker handing me two or three hundred bucks and he thinks that's such a big deal as he drives off with his cellular in his two thousand dollar suit and his Jag. I don't have what he has. Why? Because I'm a woman. I still have to try to get something from him, and he's got it because he's a man."

Mr. Right

When she first started working peepshows, Rebecca's ideal client was somebody who she could have a connection with. "Later on, the ideal client was somebody who could entertain me, like the guy who was sticking an Evian bottle up his asshole to show me the inside of his butt. In the months before I quit, the ideal client was somebody who got it over with quick."

Rainbeau's ideal customer—the guy who sits out in the audience while she gets paid to dance on stage—is extinct. "When I started in this business eighteen years ago, I stripped three shows a night for a hundred bucks and that was it. It's kind of like when CDs first came out, they were really expensive and then they went down. It's the same thing in the sex industry. When I came in, they were just starting to take off the g-string—before that, they had their g-strings on; before that, they had their g-strings and their pasties on. You got paid extremely well to take that g-string off, then that wasn't enough for these guys."

Now, in some adult theatres, a stripper pays twenty-five bucks to dance on stage so she can go out in the audience to grind on laps.

"Then we came out as lesbians and felt even more marginalized—so it wasn't a big step to be whores."

Customers aren't allowed to touch her breasts or between her legs, but most of them try to. The guys don't pull their dicks out and they don't jack off; they're wearing condoms and they cum in their pants. Some guys just want body contact and conversation. Some want all of the above. A lapdancer can make as little as fifty or as much as five hundred bucks a shift.

Erika's favorite lapdance customer is a business man. "He wears a suit. He's around forty or fifty. He's white or black or Asian. All he does is work and make money. He doesn't have a girlfriend or anybody to be close to, so he's willing to give me a lot of money just to hang out and talk. He's got it in his head that he's gonna have to pay for women the rest of his fucking life, and he's willing to do it."

"My ideal client is somebody who doesn't smell." Leslie works at a fetish and fantasy house with several other women who offer a variety of services ranging from masturbation shows to wrestling to heavy S/M. "We do a lot of ass play on men at work because technically it's a legal activity since the anus is not a genital area, so people who don't have stinky butts are my favorites."

What do Men Want?

Idiots. Ann was at the hot tubs with a customer once. "He said, 'Wow, you're a lot more intelligent than I expected you to be, and I'm losing my erection because of it.' My business is about repeat business, so I slipped right into blonde bimbo for him. At the end of the hour he said, 'I had a wonderful time.' I said, 'You must prefer the blonde bimbo type,' and he said, 'Oh no, not at all,' but that was exactly what he got and that's what got him off."

DYKES AND WHORES IN POST-WAR CITIES

"Men are for business, but girls are for pleasure"—a New York City Madam

In the 1950's, lesbians and prostitutes shared a common turf. While individuals differed in their attitudes toward solicitation and cross-sex encounters (for cash or otherwise), lesbians and prostitutes had more in common—legally and ideologically—than not.

In New York City, for example, lesbians and prostitutes shared their beds as well as their enemies. As Joan Nestle notes, the Morals Division of the NYC Police Department had trouble distinguishing between lesbians and prostitutes because when bars where raided, "whore and queer made little difference." In San Francisco, the arrest records of lesbians and prostitutes were often identical because the SFPD booked these women under then same Penal Code infractions. For instance, SFPD annual reports between 1951 and 1957 reveal that women were rarely booked under Sex Offenses, and if they got caught in a lesbian bar raid—such as the raid on Kelly's in late 1956—they were charged with misdemeanor Prostitution charges such as "vagrancy."

Lesbians and prostitutes also shared a common ideological relationship to the larger, post-war American society. Both were seen as outsiders because they did not adhere to society's prescriptions for appropriate sexual behavior. Neither lesbians or prostitutes confined their sexuality to monogamous heterosexual marriages, and neither followed the age-old rules of piety and purity. In a world with all too few economic options for women, the life choices lesbians and prostitutes made often bound them to a highly structured and tightly regulated subculture. Therefore, it should be no suprise that lesbians in San Francisco seeking semi-public places to congregate, found themselves within or adjacent to female prostitutes' urban environments.

—from a forthcoming book by Nan Alamilla Boyd about sexual outlaws in San Francisco's lesbian and gay communities.

Stats. Storm is a big buff bodybuilder who trains six days a week. "One guy brought his own tape measure so he could measure my arms. That's what he wanted to do, measure my arms, measure my calves, measure my lats."

A peer group. The guy measuring Storm asked Racquel, "Do you get a lot of guys that like this? Is this okay?" "I said, 'Yeah, some guys. Some guys like it.' 'Do they bring their tape measures?' I said, 'Well, no, you're the first.'"

Defeat. Some guys book wrestling sessions with Storm just so they can lose. "I grab them by the hair and slam them down, then they ask permission to jerk off because I've just beaten the crap out of them."

Dinner. "If someone books me for a doubles session and they want bathroom games, no." Racquel doesn't do bathroom games: "I don't care who shits on him, I am not gonna make him eat it."

A handful—even though Leslie says most of them can't take it. "They're so full of themselves. They come in and say, 'I want you to fist my ass.' And I'm like, 'Okay, sure, bend over.' And I'll get in up to here and they're like, 'Oh, that's so much.' I managed to fist this one client once. He brought me latex gloves that went up to my elbow. I put in a few fingers and thought, 'Gosh, this is really easy,' then *whaamp,* my whole arm went in there."

"I get hot and wet and squishy even if my client is funky and nasty. I love what I do. The hardest part about loving it so much is that I have to go home."

More bang for the buck. Lilith does peep show dancing. "You go up to the window and ask them if they have a tip for you. They give you a dollar and ask you to spread your legs so they can see your pussy. You say, 'I'm not gonna show my pussy for a dollar,' and they get mad and storm out."

Sol, Montreal

To give it up. While she's doing one-on-one masturbation shows, Erika's customers are on the other side of the glass spilling the beans. "When there's a lot of men together, they want the blonde with big tits to spread her legs. But when you single them out and put them in these little booths, and they're flipping their five dollars in and picking up the phone, they're telling you, 'No, what I really want—and this is my real fantasy—I want you to fuck me up the butt.'"

Ashley, Oregon

To get in through the back door. Ann gets calls from men who say they want to give their wife a surprise. "I say, 'Women don't like those kinds of surprises. If you wanna make her happy for her birthday, give her my phone number and have her call me.'" When she does agree to do couples, she concentrates on the woman. "I always wanna make the woman feel like she's queen. I make him just watch, he can't touch. I do not allow him to direct or tell me, 'You do this and you do that.' If he even sounds like that, I'm gone. But if he wants to watch and learn something, that's fine. There've been several occasions where the wife has this big orgasm and he's threatened by it. One time I looked up at this guy and said, 'You see the orgasm I'm giving your girlfriend?' I was hoping that he would go, 'That's great,' but he said [grumpily], 'Yeah, I'm seeing it, I'm seeing it.'"

To have their cake and eat it too. "Let's say they come to me and wanna do role reversal," Ann says, "they want me to be in charge. I used to think their wives wouldn't do that for them, but that's bullshit. They don't wanna do that with their wives. Let their wife be in charge? Excuse me?"

What do Women Want?

Sliding scale. Just kidding. On the contrary, Ann does offer sliding scale for women and one customer was insulted. "She gave me the same as a man plus a hundred dollars extra.

"I had another woman call me one time. She was bi. She had left the sex industry to become an attorney. She called me from a fancy hotel and wanted me to do an outcall. She goes, 'I used to work in your industry and I know what I want

Nikki, New York

Sol, representing photographer Margarita as a self-portrait.

"I play into their fantasy and take their money, and then I leave and my sex life is with women."

and I want what I want. That's why I wanna pay for it.'" Unfortunately, she canceled, so we'll never know what it was.

At the Lusty Lady, a woman-run porn theatre in San Francisco, Rebecca says even the straight dancers love to see a woman's face when the window goes up. "It became problematic. There were women who said, 'I wanna see your show, just treat me like I'm a customer'. She wanted to have that kind of customer/stripper interaction, but instead of one woman showing her body, she had six women smiling and waving and saying, 'Hi, we like you.'"

Erika thinks "it's a completely different ball game when you do shows for women. They're not really interested in seeing your pussy. They're more interested in playing the role that they think men will play. They wanna go, 'Ooh, ooh, baby. Take it all off.' I've never been expected, when I've stripped for lesbians, to get that hot. I think they're scared of me."

Janie gets a rush off tipping strippers—"I'm paying them so that means I'm running the fuck, but I'm not really running the fuck because they wouldn't be doing it with me if I wasn't paying them"—but admits that "it's something that I don't think I would have had the guts to do if I hadn't done sex work myself."

Even though she'd been calling herself bisexual for years and had slept with women, Ann never really had a coming out experience until she went to Mitchell Brothers, a local up-scale strip joint, to see about a job. "I wound up in the Ultra room putting every dollar I had through that little slot. It was because one of the women who was in the Ultra room was also bi and she spotted me and made a beeline over to my window. She showed me her pussy and I liked it, but the thing that made me sweat and made my heart pound and my mouth get dry was she was coming on to me. All this sexuality just for me. They say women don't need to see naked bodies, but it does it for me."

Ashley, Oregon

Ewwwwwww.

"Just the other day I was telling my girlfriend that my mustache was tickling this guy's cheek," says Erika, "and he kept paying me to do that. I thought it was really cute, but she was disgusted."

(continued on page 39)

FRISCO DANCERS
STRIPTEASE PERFORMANCE ART

What kind of show would erotic performers do without the modern constraints of market demands to bend over and show it all for tips?

Take-it-off connoisseurs were excited when **Daisy Anarchy**, a professional erotic dancer, rallied seven of her peers to stage just such a delicious and rare glimpse into pure striptease performance art. The event, called Frisco Dancers, showcased the unrivaled talent of San Francisco's best among the fading splendor of a grand ole burlesque house—a poignant reminder of the days when striptease had famous stars, regal environs (complete with orchestra pits), expensive costumes, sophistication, subtlety, humor, and respect.

KIM STRINGFELLOW

Frisco Dancers: Clockwise from bottom: Bootsie, Shemena, Stevie, Bonnie, Cole, Lydia. Middle: Daisy Anarchy

Frisco Dancers' modern update on burlesque, which ran for two weeks nightly, contained three hours of revealing performance art interspersed with erotic dance acts. The energy-packed dancing boasted a broad range of styles, from Ms. Anarchy's 200 ethereal twirls as Madame Butterfly, to an Indian/African synchronized dance, performed by Cole and Sheve, layered with spooky, Cheshire cat smiles, lulling hip and arm movements, and mysterious, Cirque du Soleil-type gymnastics.

Poet and performance artist **Danielle Willis** (as Lydia), dressed convincingly in drag as a male patron, satirized the desolate blindness toward feminine sexual beauty (Shemena) as it floats seductively before him on a piano stool. Thankfully, this piece did not descend into the overwrought melancholy currently in vogue and supposedly caused by sex work, and was instead successfully poignant. Ms. Willis' second piece was an imaginative, haunting twist on the object of all '30's detective novels: the murdered dame. One scene was particularly memorable. A dead woman with flowing black hair lies sprawled on the floor. When her spirit (Lydia) rises to life out of the body of a mannequin double, it looked so lifelike everyone gasped. Here was the erotic spirit of woman personified, rising from destruction to play out the power of her sexuality - lusty, wanton, delicate, and hungry.

In Frisco Dancers, no g-strings came off and breasts were incidental. Yet, the basic tenet of erotic dance was displayed at its finest—mesmerizing seduction.

—Fanny Fatale

ELIZABETH•ROGUE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ZANNA NOE

ROGUE
ON OUR BACKS
JULY-AUGUST 1994

ELIZABETH • ROGUE

ELIZABETH in the dressing room, unlaces her boots. Leather that creaks, heavy lug soles, steel-capped toes. Thirty-nine ninety-nine in a cavernous concrete-floored Army surplus store in Greensboro, North Carolina, and built to kick ass from Greensboro to San Francisco. Four pairs of combat boots already stuffed with socks and tossed under the couch, four pairs of feet now on stage in stiletto-heeled pumps, sandals with thin straps, shiny as nail polish. Leather zipped from toe to thigh.

Elizabeth at the mirror, paints her mouth cocksucker red, and thinks of tightening leather straps around her hips, a weight of rubber pressed against her cunt, a woman reaching up with legs spread, wet cunt—or thinks of a man's hand on her shoulder as she rolls a condom over the eager drop shining like a tear—or thinks of what's in the refrigerator for dinner, for after the makeup is off and the boots are back on.

Long hair—sometimes wild red curls, sometimes blonde with straight, solemn bangs—tugged over ears; bits of short hair in pink or black or purple or orange, tucked out of sight. Long hair brushing bare shoulders and back, attached to an elastic mesh cap that itches. The face with dark red lips and shadowed blue eyes snaps beneath the wig like a puzzle piece, and Rogue puts on her shoes.

ROGUE buckles the thin strip of leather at each ankle and adds another coat of paint to her mouth. Smiles at the mirror. Pulls on long black gloves and walks up the steps to the stage door in her black shoes with red straps, gold buckles narrow as fingernails. A confident hip-sway above the high red heels.

Bay Lady

She's gonna take them on for free, for pleasure, this party girl, because she likes butches

From her vantage point at the end of the bar, Whitey counts down pensively through the row of redheads, brunettes, and blondes that she could no longer choose from. She's taken her turn screwing them in the past, on that fickle merry-go-round of spin the bottle, here in this same establishment.

Women and their promises. Merry laughter rises from the group of femmes by the door. Long hair. Flashing eyes.

Sparkle gone. Frankie gone. Martha gone. Gone, gone, gone. Faces she'd never see again, never on this earth-plane. Cancer, murder, suicide, slow death by drink...one by one over the years she's seen them go. One by one time picked them off.

For Whitey was getting older.

"Things sure have changed," Whitey said to no one in particular. "A lot of women don't play the butch femme game. Just women together. It ain't Sally and Jo, but Sally and Sharon."

And another death, another piece of gossip, was circulating under the fan of the air conditioner. Maureen: her sexuality torn between society's concept of what she should be and her actual needs. Whitey heard herself speaking to the owner, who'd told her the news.

"Many nights up on Stanyon Street she'd knock on my door to get in bed with me. Couple times she came over I already had a girl with me."

Maureen was a frustrated university professor who had to keep it secret or loose her tenure. Frustrated, alcoholic, and a bitch.

Music goes strong. Beat pounds. Laughter. Sonny comes over. Sonny's a butch, hard like Whitey. Short black hair, leather coat, motorcycle boots. Trousers. Tough face. Hikes a boot up on the rung of Whitey's stool, and they talk.

"Not a lot of people I remember from the old days."

"A lot of 'em left town. Living up on the Russian River."

Whitey nods her head. "I gave up city life myself. Leave that running around for you city folks."

"Things have changed for sure."

"Yep."

"Remember that night in the Tenderloin we got thrown out of all those bars?"

It was one bar after another, hustling joints down in the red light district. The twosome traveled through the lights, shadows, jukebox music, amid crowds of customers, most of them straight. They were rough dykes, in heavy jackets, leather, boots and hats. Whitey had a knife on her. The first place, the bartender sees the knife, says, "Hey, you can't come in here with that!" Points at it. "Out! You two!"

"I use it to cut bread. And food."

"OUT!" he snarls. It's an excuse. Nobody wants them in there because they're lesbians.

They were 22 and 23 then.

Another place, both went up to a party girl wearing a gown with straps. She looks from one to the other, bewildered. The bartender says, "We don't allow that in here!" and put them out. Doesn't even let them spend money.

Din of the downtown bar surrounds them, Sonny held another drink. Whitey had gestured at the fag bartender, ordering drinks for them all, him too. Sonny reared her head back, lines crinkling around her mouth, bleary eyes turning. Slapped her hand down on the bar.

"Remember that girl?"

They laughed as they recalled the girl they'd shared. So the buddies were running the streets, and this woman had taken them *both* home.

∞

That night, downtown, in the streets bordered by Ellis, Eddy, Geary and Turk, they'd found a little hole-in-the-wall club with

chippies, pimps, a mixing of the races, where the bartender didn't care if a few gays came in to spend money. They piled into a long, red, vinyl-cushioned bench behind a table covered with empty glasses. Men and women customers everywhere, and here's a party girl, so the buddies buy her a drink, and soon she's spilling out the current pages of her life story.

"I can't work tonight," she says. "I had this trick earlier, I took it in the ass, and it still hurts. I hate doing it that way, but I needed the money."

The butches buy her another drink. The woman is semi-ugly; acne dots her white skin, lots of make-up, course, in a tight dress, body odor, and worn-out high heels, so she wobbles. Too young to be in a bar.

So the two dykes and this chippie just talk and drink, and they all go up to her room in one of those sleazy hotels—as friends, not as business—and she's gonna take them on for free, for pleasure, this party girl, because she likes butches.

They get right down to it.

It's a one room place, and Sonny wants privacy, so Whitey is exiled to the bathroom four by five feet across. Whitey sits on the top of the toilet, seat closed, and takes off her boots. She strips down to a T-shirt and shorts, and waits her turn.

After about 45 minutes, Sonny comes running into the bathroom naked.

"Help me out, Pal!"

"Huh?"

"Uh, she can't make it, unless..." Sonny looks down sheepishly. "Yuh gotta hold her wrists down while I fuck her. She's got to struggle, otherwise she can't cum. You know...it's the only way."

∞

The bar mirror reflected the two older butches, lost in thought. "Remember how you had to pin her to the bed so she could get off?" Sonny laughed.

Memory brought a smile to Whitey's eyes as she recalled the scene.

∞

The two of them standing in the Tenderloin bathroom, between tub and the toilet. Sonny panicking.

"Why are you trying to make her cum now?" Whitey demands. "Are you finished?" Pale blond hair down to her shoulders then, as now; she's picking up her boots with sweaty hands, underclothes sticking to her body. Sonny doesn't say anything. Runs a hand through her close-cropped hair, worn in a crew cut those days. She looks troubled.

"You came already?" Whitey demands to know, stands there, boots and jeans in her hands, glaring at Sonny.

"Yeah."

"Well HOT DAMN! Then it's my turn!"

Through the open door, the girl's lying on the bed naked, her dress thrown over a chair. She's watching them.

Sonny wants to get back on top and do it a second time and make the girl come that way, with Whitey holding her wrists as per the girl's instructions.

But Whitey's heavy in her sex, and wants to plow the girl bad, or be sucked off really good and deep in the girl's mouth.

"What yuh gonna make her come for? I ain't had her yet! I'll take my turn." Angry, teeth showed.

"*I* want to make her cum!" says Sonny.

And the two are nearly having a fist fight, pushing each other, clothes falling on the floor.

"I'm taking my turn now or she's gonna cum, and then she might not want to do it no more, and that leaves me out in the cold and you know it!"

"OK! OK!"

"So man, get back in this goddamn bathroom! I'm embarrassed." Whitey is just 22 years old. "I'll never be able to fuck with you freakin' watchin' me."

So Whitey kicks Sonny into the bathroom and slams the door.

"GO AHEAD," Sonny calls through the closed door, "but when you're through with her, call me. *I'll* make her cum!"

"ALL RIGHT!" Whitey's ass flashes across the room, and her body slams down on the mattress next to the girl. She's in a hurry.

Finally in the bed alone with the girl, her first lay in three weeks, she wants the girl to give her some head. So the girl goes down, parts Whitey's pubic hairs, sticks her tongue tip through in little darts, licks halfheartedly and won't do nothing else.

So Whitey gets on her, shoves a pillow under her butt and throws the girl's legs back in the air. She's flexible and can do it

Whitey shoves a pillow under her butt and throws the girl's legs back in the air. It's gonna be good.

that way, and it's gonna be good. The girl's hands hold her own legs back to accommodate the butch, and Whitey's lying between her thighs, lean white body poised over her. With her fingers she spreads her pussy lips open and pushes her cunt down against the girl's loose, hot pussy. Presses her belly to her belly. The pillow tips the girl's pelvis up at just the right angle for good contact, for the warm, satisfying feel of girl-cunt.

And Whitey's fucking her, riding her clit up and down on the girl's cunt—BANG BANG! Whitey screws her boldly, bolts of sex-thrill stirring her whole body. Feels her pussy hot around her clit and wriggles, rubbing her sex around in the girl's hot gash. Pumping, pumping into her sweet pussy. Their pussy juices combining. Cunt-to-cunt contact, squeezing her clit, squeezing it tight, tighter, tighter towards an explosion.

Now she's accompanied by the rhythmic motion of the girl's hips, and the two females are working in unison, rubbing the hard pearls of their clits together. The girl is shivering. Whitey rides her fast, 'round and 'round, hips working, hot cum oozing out of her, hands on the mattress, expression concentrating on serious business, focus unseeing, alternately gazing down at the girl's painted face. Whitey's so ready it's over in five minutes.

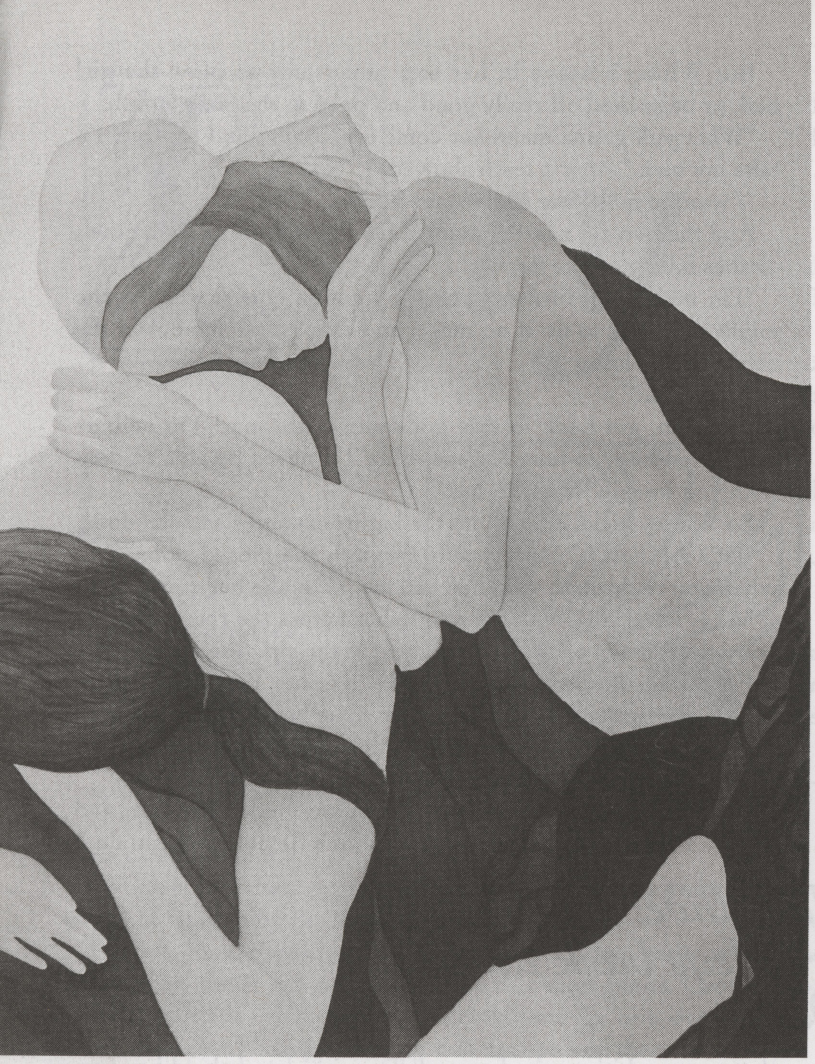
Sonny busted her nut half an hour ago, so now it's all for the girl.

Whitey lets her buddy out of the john.

Now Whitey's upside down over the girl's head, holding her wrists down. Sonny's on top, cunt-to-cunt, trying to make the girl come that way. But the girl's thinking, I'm tired, get off me, let's get this over with—still, she puts up a struggle, just for a little show.

by Red Jordan Arobateau

(continued on page 37)



ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRISTINE COTTER

Lana, A COUPLE IS

Maggie just couldn't imagine how anyone handled a lover's past. Beth seemed to want to know everything about Maggie's exes, and more than just the juicy stuff. She was famished for information about body types, favorite movies, and birth signs.

As a rule, Maggie didn't care about these things. In truth, she preferred not knowing. Almost from the beginning, it was hard to hear Beth comment on another dyke, much less hint at an intimate detail. Maggie found her limit when Beth first mentioned Lana's lingerie. She remembered feeling her ears get red. She became sullen and petulant, refusing Beth's gentle attempts to lighten what had suddenly become an uncomfortable moment. All this on their second date. The quarrel that followed almost ended what was now a wonderful coupling.

All their friends said they were perfect together. Beth was cute in an elfin sort of way—Maggie thought she'd make a perfect Peter Pan—and Maggie herself was taller, broader and more mannish at first glance. Naked, however, she was rounded and womanly. She loved to give her generous breasts to an appreciative Beth, and there was passion and deep affection between them. Each knew how fortunate they were to have met. But they learned to be cautious about ex-lover discussions.

As secure as their commitment had become, an obsession about Lana had developed in Maggie's mind. There was an unexplainable air about Beth, a sexuality that was both intense and breezy. Beth admitted to having an awareness in bedroom matters that bewildered Maggie. It just didn't figure. Beth was raised in a somber, religious household, and Maggie couldn't imagine a healthy attitude being nurtured under their roof. But Beth was amazingly comfortable about her sexuality: she could talk dirty, share fantasies, and experiment in or out of their bedroom. As their sex life became more interesting, it also became a riddle to Maggie. She became more haunted about the beau from the past who had changed her lover's lust, if not her life.

Maggie was about to address some of these issues with Beth when an unexpected letter arrived. It was addressed to Beth and written in lavender ink. The unfamiliar handwriting was bold yet delicate, with capital letters flowing like a stream winding around the rest of the name. The upper left corner had no return address. It simply said "Lana."

Maggie sorted the mail as she often did and placed Beth's pile in its usual corner of their desk. She was particular about placing the mysterious letter on top. Beth came in from a morning run and retrieved a glass of orange juice from the refrigerator. Maggie watched from the den as her lover sauntered over and casually collected her stack of bills and advertisements, then started up the stairs to shower as was her routine.

Suddenly Beth stopped and stood as if frozen in time. She stared at the top letter for what seemed like an eternity, then slowly opened the envelope as she settled onto the steps to read. Maggie carefully observed her lover's face as she read the three page message from Lana. When she finished the letter, Beth folded it back into its place and seemed to sigh. She called out to Maggie—who answered from closer than Beth had expected—and explained she'd heard from an old friend and needed to make a long distance call. She was quite candid when she asked to be given some privacy on the bedroom phone for a time.

Beth returned downstairs after 30 minutes, showered, dressed, and headed for the kitchen where Maggie was preparing lunch. She kissed Maggie's nape as she nestled from behind.

"Guess what." Beth's voice was friendly but there was an edge of anxiety in it. "I've invited someone to stay with us for a few weeks."

Beth explained that, to pay off a debt from the past, she had offered bed and board to an old friend. She knew Maggie would understand how it was to need support during tough times, and this friend, Lana, had just ended a relationship that was pretty intense.

Maggie was apprehensive. They didn't talk much during the week before Lana's arrival. Beth revealed no mood changes but, while things remained agreeable between them, a feeling of distraction hung in the air. When Saturday rolled around, Lana's arrival would be a deliverance for them both.

Lana's car pulled into their driveway around midday and Maggie was the first to hear the engine. She peered out the venetian blinds as she called upstairs to Beth. Beth came bounding down, hastened out the front door, and greeted the driver who emerged from the vehicle. The tall slender woman was tanned and dressed in faded jeans and a denim shirt, tails tied at her midsection revealing a shapely, firm abdomen. Her hair was dark brown and naturally curly, though some lighter streaks of color brightened a face that seemed radiant even in the afternoon sun. Maggie's eyes narrowed as Beth and Lana embraced. If they had parted in anger, it was not visible now.

Maggie could see Beth help Lana with her luggage as they chattered away while walking toward the house. Waiting in the doorway, Maggie couldn't help being captivated by this woman who approached her, offering her hand. Instead of the handshake Maggie expected, Lana bent slightly forward and turned Maggie's hand lightly, exposing her wrist. She then touched her lips to Maggie's skin, a smooth movement that sent a quiver throughout her being. The hostess smiled nervously, but Lana's green eyes were warm and confident. When Lana thanked them it was with a French accent.

They spent the warm afternoon on the patio talking about mundane subjects, though Maggie rarely spoke. Instead, she was transfixed

Maggie & Beth

VISITED BY AN EX-LOVER

By P.J. WALKER

by the raw sensuality of Lana. Without an improper word or gesture, Lana exuded sex. She looked commandingly toward whomever she was speaking. Her enigmatic smile matched her appraising eyes, and her laugh was light and casual while her mind was quick and her wit bold. When the names of Beth's and Lana's mutual acquaintances arose, Maggie, rather than feeling excluded, found herself eager to hear what had become of them.

After Beth provided their guest with towels and said goodnight, Maggie was eager, finally, for details about Lana. Beth answered all inquiries openly and without reluctance. Lana was born in Quebec, Canada and moved to Montreal. They spent the summer together there and had fallen deeply in love. But Lana wasn't able to handle the lesbian distinction and, though Beth wasn't her first, she ended the affair when Beth objected to Lana's need to date men.

Maggie couldn't believe Lana ever had difficulty calling herself a lesbian. At dinner, she was one of the more radical lesbian visionaries Maggie had ever met. She spoke of utopian lesbian communes where repression was unthinkable, where women were free from anything patriarchal, including sexual rules or inhibitions. Maggie remembered feeling herself blush as she recalled Lana's relaxed way of describing sexual practices that were better performed by a woman.

The next morning, Lana joined them mid-way through breakfast. Maggie was struck by how attractive she was even before the usual morning preparations. Lana's gaze was even and her smile seemed even more provocative than the night before. Suddenly self-conscious, Maggie excused herself from the table saying that she had planned to wash the car.

She had just completed the waxing and was preparing to shine the windows when Beth came bouncing down the driveway. She looked radiant in the afternoon sun and Maggie felt a pang in her groin. Maggie knew she'd been preoccupied with tantalizing thoughts about Lana, and seeing Beth in shorts and tank top made her horny. A wanton vision of Lana and Beth pleasuring each other flashed before her eyes. The fantasy filled her with surprisingly little shame and considerable lust. Beth seemed to share her thoughts, because she suggested Maggie leave the windows unfinished until sundown.

"Besides," she cooed, "I'm in the mood for a matinee."

They walked back into the house and did a cursory search for Lana. They found her covered in lotion, lying in a chaise on the patio with her bra off. Maggie tried not to stare but couldn't avoid noticing Lana's exquisite breasts. They were perfectly formed, and her nipples were small with brown centers. She seemed to be dozing. Beth took Maggie's hand and led her quietly upstairs. Maggie felt an electricity as if they were about to engage in the forbidden.

As they entered the bedroom, Maggie was as excited about lovemaking as she had ever been. As they began to undress each other, Maggie could feel an unusual hunger in her lover. Beth reached for Maggie and pulled her to the bed in a feverish race to ravage her willing lover's body. Maggie melted as Beth forced her face into her breasts and moved her face around, allowing her cheeks, mouth and nose to browse her chest. Maggie knew Beth was teasing her and when she rolled over on to her back, she knew it was time to make Beth prove that her appetite was real.

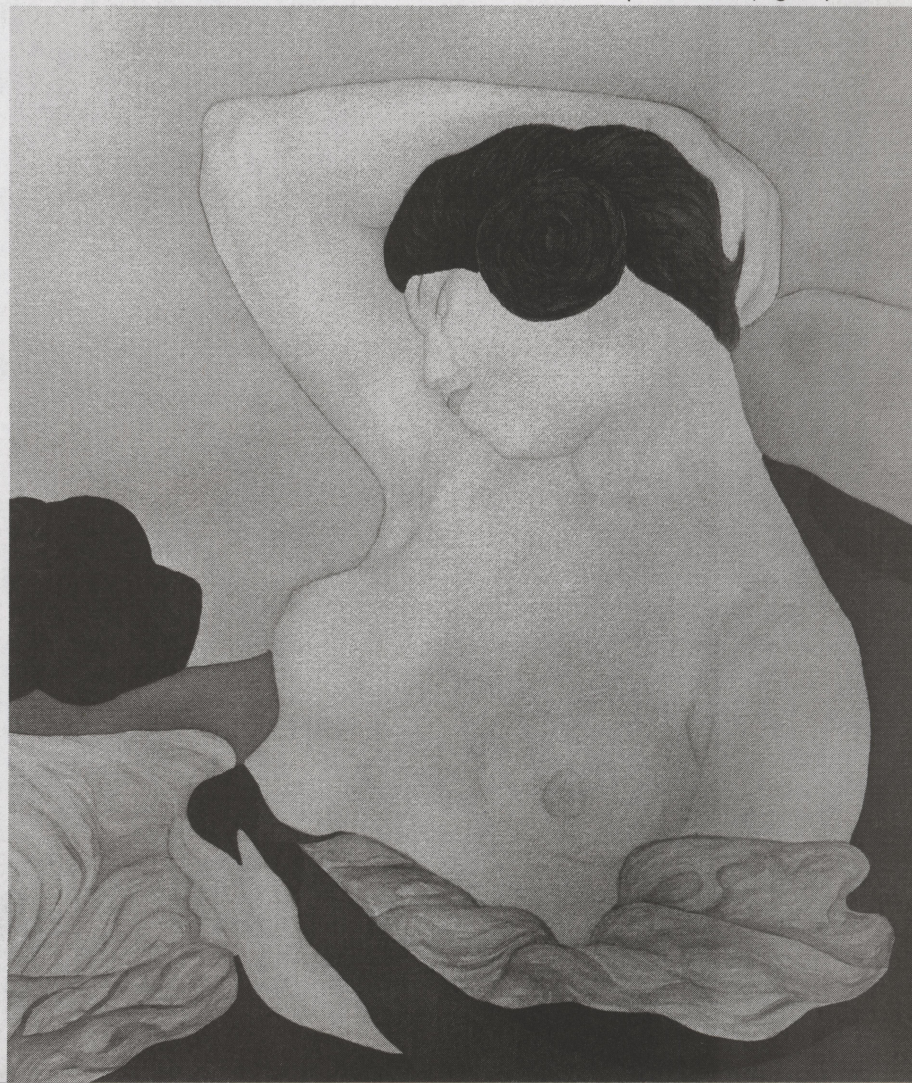
"You know how turned on I am, Beth. You'd better be prepared to deliver."

As Maggie lay on her back eagerly awaiting what pleasures were forthcoming, she looked over at the doorway to see Lana's glowing, half-naked form observing them. For a moment, Maggie thought to interrupt Beth's hands from their fondling to see if Lana had intruded accidentally. But her eyes met Lana's, and suddenly Maggie felt herself become even more aroused by Beth's hands on her breasts. As Lana removed her shorts, Beth too became aware of her. Lana's thong underwear barely covered her pubic area and her firmly formed buttocks tightened as she walked towards their bed.

"Can I join you?" she asked.

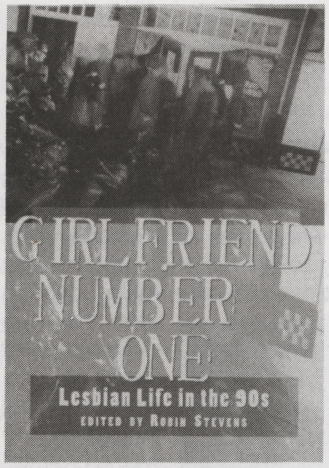
It seemed a perfect question for the situation. Without answering, Beth slid her body down Maggie's as Lana straddled Maggie's stomach. Maggie could no longer see Beth but she could feel her lover's tongue probe at the wetness between her legs. When Lana began to trail her fingers along Maggie's sides, Maggie moaned as her guest's fingers headed upward toward the large breasts whose nipples were erect and ready to be massaged. Lana circled each nipple with her finger, and Maggie felt Beth exchange her tongue for her long, tender fingers. Her wetness allowed for the penetration she so loved. She noticed

(continued on page 42)



Baby Dykes

Photos by Annie Sprinkle



GIRLFRIEND #1: LESBIAN LIFE IN THE 90'S

Edited by Robin Stevens
Cleis Press

Okay gals, this ain't no Naiad girl-gets-girl happily-ever-after kind of read. We've left the eighties and we're now talking fatal attraction, fisting, and high fashion. We're talking everybody's worst nightmares, most devastating break-ups, most insane furtive fucks. We're at that party where absolutely everybody has slept with one or two of everybody else. It's not always a pretty pink picture of lesbiana, but it cuts swiftly—and not always painlessly—to the chase.

Girlfriend #1 purports to be the (junk?) food for the Generation X of the lesbian nation. The oversize format, the campy clippings, and pithy author's bios are as much a part of the package as the fast fiction and cool cartoons from a range of well and not so well known lesbian expressors. A slew of the stuff has been read at San Francisco's infamous performance space cum cafe, Red Dora's Bearded Lady.

Kris Kovick's revealing wet dream "Miracle at the Men's Magazine Rack" muscles you right in next to the boys reading porn magazines in the bookstore—mmmm—and Elissa Perry's "Good Customer Service," which describes some sexy dyke action in a major department store, made me vow to start bra shopping at Macy's. Hot tip: Penny Perkin's pseudo-academic deconstruction of a lesbian date is worth the cover price alone. It's titled "A Lesbian Date is Something That You Have to Have a High IQ to Figure Out You've Been Asked Out On." Agree? You have to.

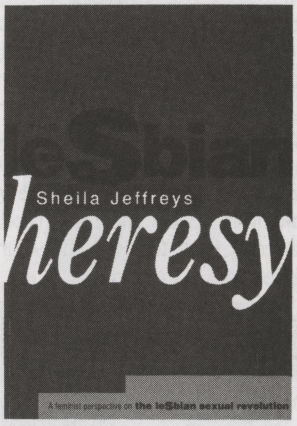
Girlfriend #1 is not for newly out, hopelessly romantic, or even insanely optimistic lucky-in-love types. It is more lesbian chick than lesbian chic, and the only thing that's missing from making the whole read a swell Saturday night, are the bevy of cute young things at the back of the cafe and the smell of leather and coffee.

—Louise Rafkin

THE LESBIAN HERESY

Sheila Jeffries
Spinifex

Be grateful I read this book—so you won't have to. *The Lesbian Heresy* - whose premise is that the lesbian sexual revolution (whatever *that* was) has ruined feminism- is a badly written, poorly edited, utterly unresearched excuse for political theory.



Don't bother wading through turgid prose such as "There is a difference between making acts of separation without acknowledging that that is what they are and being a separatist"; don't bother correcting on your own atrocious grammar such as "Butch/femme...is about how to choose a sexual partner and what to do with them"; don't bother to supply the historical evidence that Jeffries needs, but fails to provide, for her opening chapter's argument that early 20th century sexology placed lesbians irrevocably under "heteropatriarchal" control.

Don't bother, that is, unless you get a sadistic pleasure out of laughing at other people's bone-headed misreadings (for example, after quoting a lesbian therapist who uses "lack of fighting in a lesbian relationship as a diagnostic clue to detect low-level sexuality," Jeffries responds, "Battering, she seems to be suggesting, could be good for sex"). Or perhaps you'll chuckle at Jeffries's massive exaggerations and fallacious accusations, such as calling the producers of *On Our Backs* "lesbian sex industrialists" who lure models into pornography by offering them lots of cash.

Why, in the mid-90's, is Jeffries *still* writing this anti-porn, anti-S/M, anti-butch/femme, anti-dildo, anti-sex work, anti-gay male, anti-transsexualism, anti-postmodernist, pro-separatist crap? Why do we have yet another book that spends two paragraphs dissing the New Right, and then 250 pages trashing other lesbians? Answer: *The Lesbian Heresy* is a symptom of a very real—and truly disturbing—generation gap between older lesbians born in the flames of lesbian feminism, and younger dykes who are feeling their queer oats. Too bad Jeffries doesn't know it.

—Heather Findlay

THROW IT TO THE RIVER

Nice Rodriguez
Women's Press

First time author Nice Rodriguez should stick to writing. Her debut, Throw it to the River, is an impressive collection of fourteen short stories set in Canada and in the Philippines. In a style both erotic and simple, Rodriguez has fashioned stories that are shorn of ornamentation, yet artful in their depiction of U.S. cultural colonialism and lost innocence.

From the story of the little lesbian who hates to wear dresses, to Remedios the bus conductor who slyly courts the devout Julianita, Rodriguez draws complex, hilarious and often familiar portraits. In "When You're Six" she writes: "Your Mama says you can be Julie Andrews, but not Elvis Presley. Do you believe her? No! You wear your brother's jacket and turn the collar up.... And you sing 'Love Me Tender' for the banana fritter girl." Rodriguez also pokes some fun at the lesbian and feminist movements: "The Lesbian Hen" tells the story of a hen who wants to be a rooster, meets the hen of her dreams, and fathers chicks. She plays with the idea of rooster insemination, but chooses instead to adopt, and sets up a separate haven in a remote part of the farm.

Throw it the the River
author Nice Rodriguez

After stints as a CPA and a business writer, Rodriguez has finally found her niche. Rodriguez's talent for short fiction is clear and her choices in material is refreshing. In Throw it to the River, she has committed to paper powerful stories of working class Filipina lesbians which are written without condescension or sentimentality.

—Arlyn Tobias Gajilan

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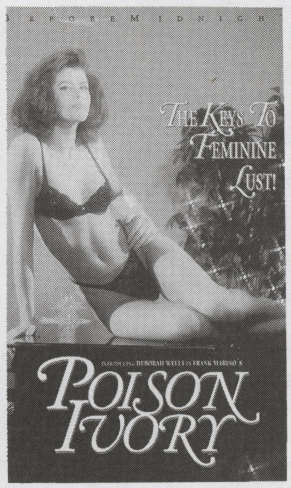
Summer always takes so long to get here, lingers a while then disappears as quickly as it came. Sounds a little like my dating life...sigh. To me summer seems like a great time to rent videos: maybe you're dateless and have been out in the sun watching cuties playing softball, or working on their cars, but you decide that going home alone is better than having to ask someone her name. Or maybe your lover has been dragging you around window shopping all day, and all you could think about was how nice her new dress would look piled up on the floor next to the bed. It's a great time to swing by your favorite video store.

Sometimes our viewing partners aren't as comfortable as we are in the "big girls'" section, so try starting with films under the "erotic" heading. You can tell they aren't quite as trashy just by the box. Most of these films are targeted for the mainstream XXX viewer, but just remember: *the remote control is your friend.* In fact, try giving your partner the remote—this will give you the opportunity to see what she likes and what she doesn't. Next time she visits, you can have only the most appropriate films available!

To start with, ***Et L'Amour,*** released by **Wolfe Video** and produced by **Ponygirl Productions,** is the visual aphrodisiac women have been waiting for. Very sensual, not overtly sexual, this "woman to woman" film (as the press release puts it) reminds me of a tantalizing, rich dessert. The first scene is like any outstanding date I've ever had, complete with passionate looks, sexy talk, and a tremendously erotic build-up. Scene two is a holiday affair in which a woman gives her girlfriend a care package stuffed with sexy lingerie, candles—scented of course—and beautiful "getting in the mood" music. The very eager recipient decides that the occasion calls for an informal fashion show. One thing leads to another and...well, you know.

Poison Ivory by **Urban Attractions** is a film that struck me as a little scripted, but the girl/girl sex scenes are very exciting. Of course the actresses are all femmes—when is the adult entertainment industry going to get with the program?—but if you can get past that, then you're bound to have a fun evening. The film is about a woman writing a paper on women's sexual experiences with other women. The representation of women is diverse as far as body types, but the big disappointment to me—as in many pornos—is the absence of women of color. And if a film *does* feature predominately women of color, then usually they are represented very stereotypically. Women film makers, not surprisingly, seem to be the pioneers in regards to integration.



Now for something a little off the beaten path: a documentary about women and S/M practices. **Zone Sweet Zone** by **Urban Productions** was directed by very sexy Juani Iocco who doesn't appear in the film but received Butch of the Month recognition in the *On Our Backs* office. *Zone Sweet Zone* was filmed in Australia on what appears to be a non-PC women's weekend, and although it's no more explicit than some prime time TV documentaries I've seen, it received an 'X' rating. The women talk about how they were introduced to S/M, what S/M means to them, and what type of role it plays in their everyday life. You get to watch play piercings, slaves who get turned into beasts of burden by their masters, and a tribal dance around the campfire where all the pierced women hang very heavy weights from their bodies. The producers of this film get big points from me for having latex gloves everywhere. *Zone Sweet Zone* is a good film, and frankly I believe there should be more films produced like this, because this particular vanilla girl felt like she learned a lot and had her mind opened a little.

I realize that I promised you I would be reviewing some boy films, and I've been negligent in my duties. So stay tuned for a review of Catalina's ***Taste of Leather*** next time. ❖

BIG, WET, SULTRY KISSES...

MISS T., PRINCESS OF PORN

(continued from page 29)

Now this scene is right up Whitey's alley. She was a tomboy, used to wrestle and fight a lot in school, so she does better than just pin the girl's wrists. While the girl's fighting, she wrestles her arm up under her in a hammer lock, forces the girl's lips open with her tongue, and french kisses her long and deep, then roughly sucks her nipples.

The girl on the mattress is struggling. Whitey holds her down and works on her top half, and Sonny has crawled down between her legs, alternately sucking and finger fucking her. And just about then it starts to feel good to the girl.

∞

"I like to give it rough," boasted Whitey over the din of the music in the bar, "but only if she consents."

Sonny looked at her buddy. She'd heard stories about Whitey and a woman. That Whitey attacked her or something. That night in that hotel, though, everyone was game. Sonny closes her tired eyes.

∞

She's penetrating the girl with her fingers, short jabs that rub the clit with her palm. The two of them work on the girl and she sweats, tosses, moans, letting herself go, feeling herself open up. Then Sonny's tongue is exhausted and her fingers are numb. So they switch around. Sonny has to pin her down while Whitey sucks her off.

The girl's temperature is rising, her hips begin to thrust up involuntarily, control slipping away as Whitey's finger's drive into her, pumping into her wet pussy, strong, unrelenting, so she must surrender to it, and the girl's thinking inside, *Oooh, my God!* She feels a tongue licking over and over her clit, and a mouth sucking the cum out of her. Then suddenly, finally she gets off—BANG BANG! OH SO GOOD!— after what seems like hours. Everybody sweats. The two butches congratulate themselves.

"WHEW!"

"Thanks, you two, thank you!"

The girl is so grateful to them!

∞

That had been twelve years past. Now here they were in exactly the same bar where they'd started out.

Hard beat of the music pounded. Whitey was lost in thought, staring at the reflection of her and Sonny in the mirror behind the bar. The girl and the two butches from another time, another year, lingered on the top floor of her brain, dancing on the periphery of consciousness.

It was a cum to remember.

The above passage is excerpted from Red Jordan's novel Lay Lady Lay, *"a love story about a working class dyke and a lonely woman." For a Red Jordan Press catalogue, write to 484 Lake Park Ave., #228, Oakland, CA 94610.* ❖

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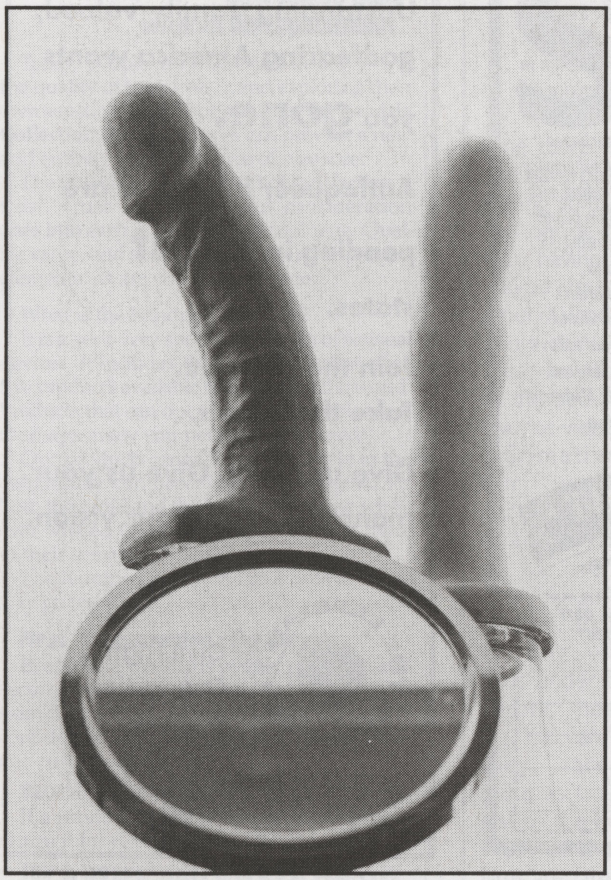

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(continued from page 15)

found good non-sexual friends.) Set aside some time when you won't be interrupted, get out that paper and pencil again, and call up each gal who intrigues you for whatever reason. Keep in mind that she won't know your name, so you may have to say "Uh, hi, Bootsie, I'm FUCK MY GIRLBUTT WITH YOUR LONG HARD DYKE TOOL, and, uh...."

No, really, all you need to say at first is "Hi, you answered my ad." Remember that she is probably another terrified human being, not an ogre. Your conversation may feel awkward and have a lot of embarrassing pauses. THISIS-NORMAL. Asking her what in particular she liked about your ad is a great way to get started. She may well ask you, in turn, what in particular you liked about her letter or voice-mail message, so it's a good idea to think about this ahead of time.

If you decide she sounds kinda hot, the next step is asking her if she'd like to meet in person. (If she says no, by the way, she obviously doesn't deserve you.) If she says yes, make sure you write down the time and place you've agreed to meet. *And* her physical description (very important).

Setting up a rendezvous.

Be willing to take chances—thinking of it as an adventure or an experiment helps—but trust your feelings about each woman. If someone makes you uncomfortable—in a way that's not pleasurable—you have absolutely no obligation to stay on the phone with her, answer her questions, or meet with her, let alone have sex.

A couple of times I decided I didn't want to meet with anyone who responded to a given ad of mine or they lived in another state or were my ex-girlfriend or someone I knew and couldn't stand. Or no one responded at all, ouch. This can be really horrid. But for me, the "practicing wanting" part has generally made it worthwhile.

A café is a very good place to meet—it's a public (safe) place, often with secluded areas where you can talk in privacy, and you can keep on ordering snacks and/or beverages for hours if need be.

Both of you may feel more comfortable talking about non-sexual subjects for a bit. But it was a sex ad you placed, right? And she did answer it. So at some point, if you have any sexual interest in each other, you'll want to get down to biz. Take it slow. "What part of *'Do me'* don't you understand," while admirably clear, may be a bit much for starters. "I'd really like to kiss you," on the other hand, can be a really sweet way to begin.

Take a chance. And maybe, when you say you'd really like to kiss her, she'll smile and pull you close. ❖

(continued from page 22)

The lover Janie had when she worked in the industry didn't approve either. "She has a very high-powered professional job and she's a pervert. I didn't tell her what I was doing for a while because she would say, 'If you're a quiet professional by day and a whip-wielding dominatrix by night, then that's okay. But dominatrix by day, dominatrix by night, that's sort of weird."

Storm gets hassled by other black women, gay and straight. "Nice black girls don't do this. It's bad enough that I'm into S/M, without having this borderline sexual association with men. I'm breaking every black woman's taboo simply by existing."

"Sex can be work the way cooking can be work, and sex can be love the way cooking can be love," but Rebecca's mom felt betrayed when she started stripping. "She'd spent all this time struggling so that her daughter would grow up in a world where she could make her way with her mind, and all of the sudden I was making a living with my body and my looks.

"A lot of people think that being stared at when you're stripping feels the same as harassment on the street, when in fact the guys who were paying me were acknowledging that my sexuality was mine—I could sell access to it, therefore it belonged to me. Out on the street, a guy thinks he can take that kind of access without giving me anything in return."

Leslie's been waiting for dykes to come down on her, but they haven't. "I haven't found one yet who's not completely and utterly fascinated when I tell them what I do for a living. I haven't had anybody give me a moral trip, but I used it once to pick somebody up. I said, 'Oh, it's so terrible. Women won't go out with me because they think what I do is so awful.' She was like, 'Awww,' and I was like, 'Score!'"

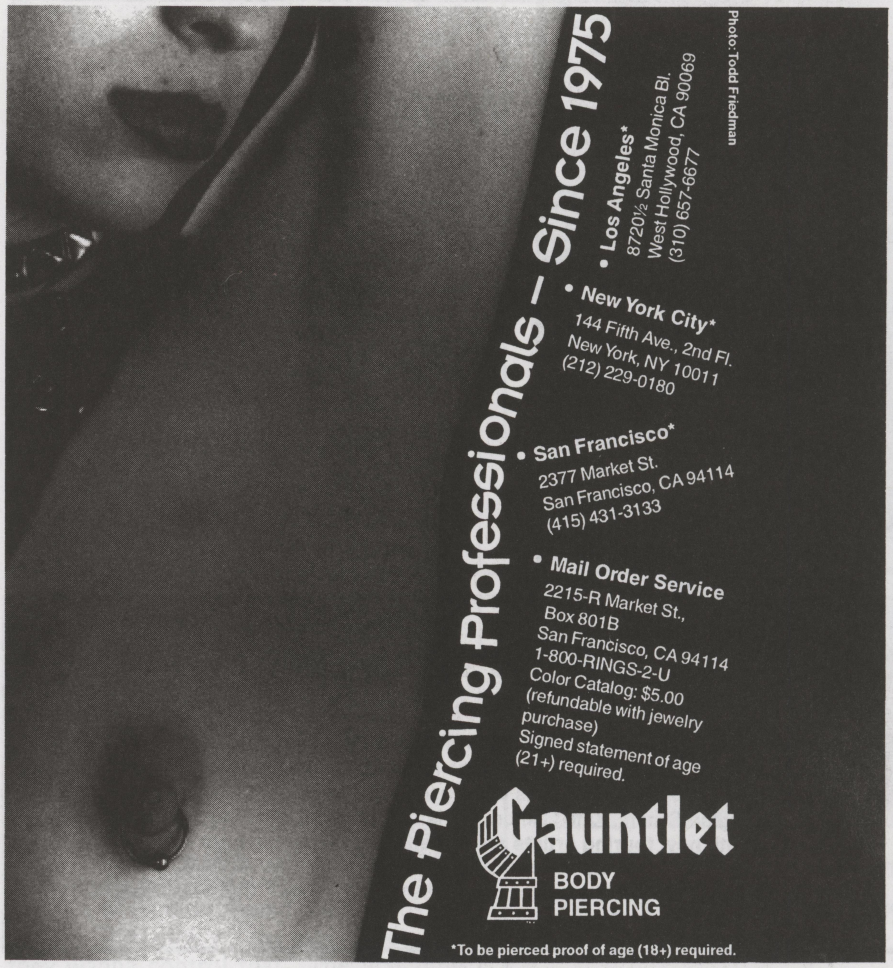
Was It Good For You?

Erika gets turned on by the cash. "If a guy's giving me a lot of money, I'll get totally hot with him. The more money he gives me, the hotter I'll get. My inhibitions fall down and I push more. If he keeps handing me twenties, I can be really good."

Leslie loves submissive clients. "Some women I work with just turn off and check out. I'm sorry, but I'm a leather dyke and I love S/M, I love almost everything about it. I get hot and wet and squishy even if my client is funky and nasty. I love what I do. The hardest part about loving it so much is that I have to go home. I'm like, 'Somebody come to my house and have sex with me NOW!'" She came in a session once and freaked out. "I was like, 'Oh my god, what am I gonna do?' Then I went, wait a minute, I've faked it so many times, they don't know the difference.'"

When Fresca worked in New York she

(continued on next page)



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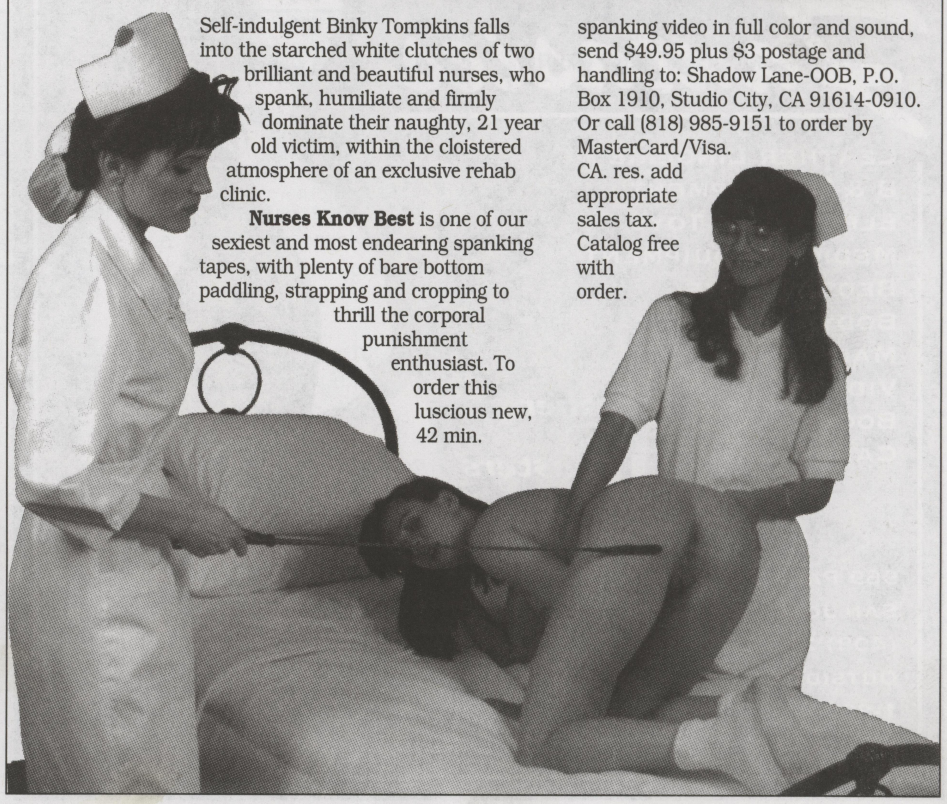

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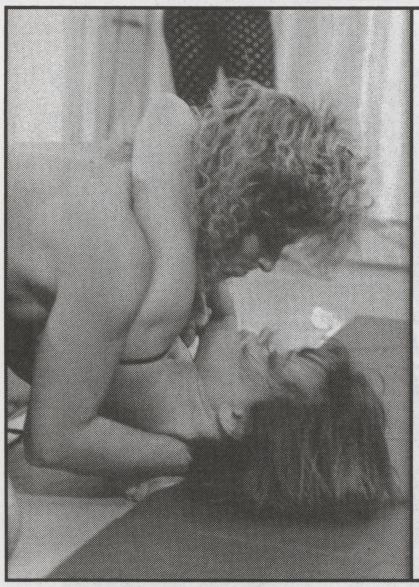

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Continued from previous page)

came a lot. "Lap dancing there is a lot different than it is here. You're topless and you straddle them, so there were times when I got off because my clit was right up against them. They're wearing clothes, but you're doing this motion and you can't help but get turned on. I would cut myself off, but my body would still respond."

Lilith doesn't have long hair or wear short dresses on the street, but she does at work. "It's an expression of the heterosexual part of myself. It's a really safe environment to wear sexy clothes and do all these things that I would never feel safe doing out here. I save that for making money and I make good money because I'm being for real and men can tell. I do lap dancing and I work behind glass. When I first started I would cum during the one-on-one shows. I won't cum in my shows now though.

"I want the power of knowing that I wear a wig and that I take off my makeup and that I don't look anything like that, and they don't know that. I play into their fantasy and take their money, and then I leave and my sex life is with women. By cumming, I give all that away, all the sudden I'm really vulnerable." One customer she came with kept coming back, at a hundred dollars a pop. "I wished he wouldn't. Every time I saw him it reminded me. We had this really hot show. He tied his dick up and did all this torture to it. It was so hot. He was talking so dirty and I was talking so dirty. I was really into it, so I was pretty embarassed afterward."

Bonus

Rebecca thinks doing sex work is like running away to join the circus. "You're a weirdo in your home town and you run away to be with all the other weirdos." The girls she met working peepshows didn't hassle her like everybody else did. "Some were dykes, some were bi, some were straight. I had lived in the straight community and been hated because I liked girls, and I had lived in the lesbian community and been hated because I liked boys. It was the first time I had ever been able to walk into a room as a bi woman and know that there wasn't going to be anyone in the room who hated me because of who I slept with."

Leslie was terrified when she started in the business. "I was like, 'Oh my god, I'm really fat and nobody's gonna want me,' but I have had some of the most beautiful women I have ever seen up close go, 'God, you are so great. I just love to look at you when you run around naked.' Women who do this work 'cause they love it and women who are totally hot tell me this all the time. For me as a dyke that's where it is. Some of the women are straight, which was amazing to me because I don't have a connection with straight people most of the time. That's one thing that I'll never ever forget, finding some self-esteem through other women, not through men, which is what we're taught."

For Erika, sex work was the missing link. "I thought that's what was going on. I thought that's what men were doing. I thought they were jerking off to all the diaper commercials, but now I know they are. It clarified why men piss me off so much. Because they *are* assholes and they *will* fuck their children. They'll pretend they're not doing it and pretend they're not doing it. Then you get into the sex industry and boom, there it is."

Ann found out that "there's no segment of this society that doesn't come to the sex industry for their kinks. Every time I drive past this particular company I smile, because despite his weight lifting and his wife and his babies, when the vice president comes over to my house, he puts on my lingerie.

"If I wasn't a prostitute, I would have never known that somebody like *that* would do something like *that*. There's no way he would ever associate with other cross-dressers. These guys don't identify with perverts or queers, they identify with the power structure. They're comfortable with their hypocrisy and their double standards, but I think there's an underlying guilt that causes them to be hateful. I'm dirty, they're clean. To keep that separation you have to have some kind of hatred in your heart."

The clients who scared Rebecca the most were the clients who hated her for tempting them. "They'd be doing their thing and they'd be staring at you not with lust or desire, but with total hatred, like, 'I hate myself for doing this and I hate you for making me do this.' Those were the ones who I kept an eye out for when I was walking down the street."

"Those same people who rely on our services—we calm 'em down and balance their little chakras and pat 'em on the butt and send 'em home and what do they do? They vote against us," Ann says. "You're the scapegoat, but you look at George Bush and you know he's a John. Nobody has to tell you. I finally did hear a piece of a rumor: he liked doubles down in Texas, thank you, before he got voted in. But, nobody had to tell me that, I knew. I looked at him and thought, 'John.' He's got John written all over him."

Denise T. and her buddies in Ann Arbor got busted after a series of exposés on prostitution in the local newspapers pushed the cops to make a move. They went undercover and posed as customers. "I remember the cop that I saw. I didn't do anything but give him a straight massage. I didn't solicit him either. It didn't matter, that's what they charged me with." The parlor closed down, but Denise T. says you never get out of the business that way because your regulars will always find you. The girls started working out of their houses, threw a hooker's ball to raise money to pay off the lawyers again, and started the Ann Arbor chapter of COYOTE, Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, a national organization of prostitutes.

Today, Denise T. feels the same way about sex work that she did when she was doing it. "It's a job, like any other job. It's stigmatized, but that's because men want it that way. They feel out of control around their needs for women. They think we can exploit them and they wanna control that." The first time Rebecca turned a trick she thought, "That was so easy. If women were allowed to find out how easy that was, we'd have so fucking much money we could take over the world." ❖

LESBIAN STRIPPER DOCUMENTARY

MONEY SHOT

Money Shot, a documentary on lesbian strippers, had its premier screening in June at the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. The video was conceived and directed by **Hima Narumanchi,** a stripper who wanted to explore for herself as well as educate the public on just who strippers are and why they enjoy their line of work.

Hima feels the video's strengths lie in "the trust and level of intimacy they had with me, as an inside person who understands their issues, so they could open up and really talk."

The introduction features a brief history of lesbians and bisexuals who've done sex work in the past, and the climates they've worked under. "For instance, there was more acceptance back in the '60's and early '70's, before the anti-porn wave hit. The '80's saw more queer women enter the sex industry, and the gay community acknowledging sex workers and beginning to take their issues more seriously."

"The reason I did the video was to explode the stereotypes people have of strippers by portraying their intelligence and strengths through the stories they have to tell. I felt strongly about the importance of having sex work issues raised, for once, from the voices of sex workers. Such as, what does it mean as a woman to work in a stigmatized field?"

Some criticisms leveled at the video were that the women were too articulate. "As if sex workers can't think or talk!", Hima snorts. The women in the video run the gamut of ethnic, economic and educational backgrounds.

—***Fanny Fatale***

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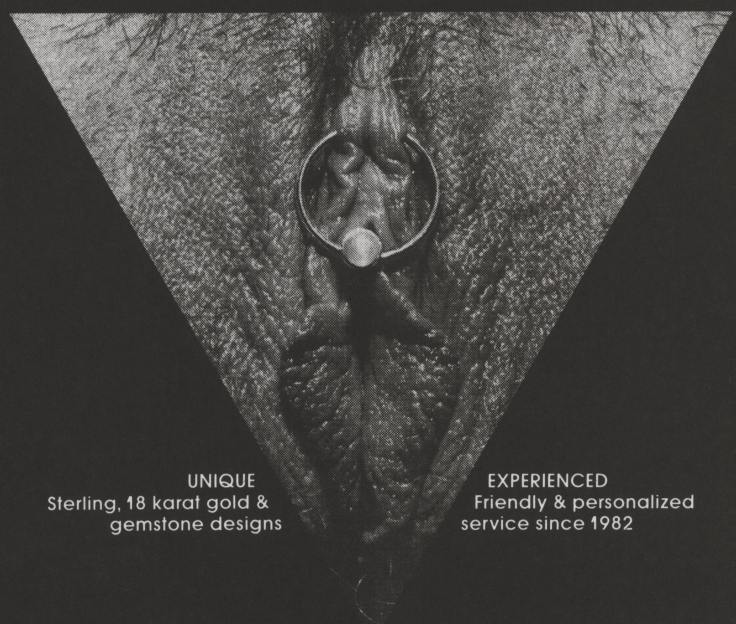

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(continued from page 31)

Lana tugging her thong panties aside and positioning her own wetness over Beth's mouth. Then this mysterious woman from her lover's past leaned forward and began to suck on Maggie's tits.

Maggie held Lana's head in her hands, quietly pulling her forward when she wanted to be suckled even harder. And Lana could suck with an energy that could not be believed. She took Maggie's large nipple entirely into her mouth and while she massaged the other nipple, she used her tongue to flick at the rigid, hard tip in her mouth.

All of this made Beth's fingers seem even more electrified as she slid them in and out of Maggie's hot box. Maggie's hips moved in rhythm with those probing fingers and when she felt Beth's fingers massaging her G-spot, she knew that her orgasm was going to be explosive. But she didn't want to come yet. She hadn't had enough of the skilled fingers and tongue that were working her breasts. Maggie opened her eyes to see Lana's face. Lana was groaning quietly, and Maggie guessed that Lana's pussy juices were being guzzled by Beth.

The notion that Beth was licking Lana's love bud made Maggie even more turned on. Lana's pleasure became an offering. As she received it gratefully, she remembered many nights of enjoying Beth's gifted tongue, and soon she could no longer keep her orgasm from exploding. When she came, her fluid shot out into Beth's hand. Maggie only did this when sex was very hot; knowing this, Beth kept her fingers inside her lover while she finished licking out their guest.

Lana kissed the resting Maggie more passionately than Maggie expected, her breath heavier as she arched her back in enjoyment. Maggie watched without resentment. She wanted, in fact, to be more directly involved, so she gently turned Lana over on her side and looked to Beth, who interrupted her licking to meet eyes with Maggie for the first time.

"Come up here and help me, huh?"

Beth grinned, and then moved quickly to Lana's empty side. Together Maggie and Beth each took Lana's nipples into their mouths. On her back with her breasts exposed to the hungry couple, Lana heaved a deep moan that became louder as the women sucked her even firmer and faster. She held her friends' heads against her bosom, and the feel of them at her nipples increased the fierce arousal already moving rapidly throughout her body.

She thought she was ready to go insane and knew she needed to be fucked. Fucked hard, quickly, and without mercy. As if both her lovers grasped her immediacy, she was turned onto her side in silence. She faced Beth now, who pressed herself tightly against Lana and kissed her face and mouth. Lana could taste her own juices as Beth used her tongue as expertly as she had between Lana's legs. Maggie lay behind Lana pushing her erect

nipples against her back. She let her mouth play between the curls on the back of Lana's neck as she reached her hand around to feel the hot wetness in Lana's sweet pussy. She let her eager fingers explore the pubic curls. Lana's legs opened in a demanding movement and Maggie heard her whisper "Please!" in a low and husky voice.

It was both request and command. Maggie slid her fingers into Lana's wetness and positioned her palm to press tightly against Lana's swollen clitoris. Lana's hips moved with the motion of Maggie's hand. As Lana's need grew more pressing, her she began to feel those welcome waves of pleasure building throughout her body. She concentrated fully on her two lovers' touches, finally collapsing, sated and fulfilled. Lana lay back, labored in her blissful satisfaction.

Maggie looked to Beth once more; she knew how selfless her partner could be in bed but felt the hunger in her could not be ignored. She also kept in mind that Lana was more than aware of Beth's preferences. Beth always enjoyed oral sex in every position or location suggested to her, so Maggie was not surprised when Beth knelt over Lana's head, thighs wide open and the sweet smell of her wet cunt unavoidable to the resting Lana.

"Come on Maggie. Kiss me while I wait for this lazy Canadian to eat my pussy."

Maggie laughed. She knelt in front of Beth and kissed her deeply. She knew that Beth wanted her favorite lovemaking to begin. Beth's love juices trickled down onto Lana's lips, and her old lover reached her arms around Beth's ass and pulled her pussy lips down to her mouth. Maggie listened as Beth made sounds of pleasure from deep within. Lana worked her tongue furiously into the vaginal opening, her mouth a tool of love as she licked and sucked the desire out of the woman she once loved. As Lana rimmed her hole and sucked her clit, Beth rocked in abandonment, her pleasure enhanced by the mouth and fingers working lovingly at her nipples. An orgasm more powerful than she'd thought possible built up inside her. As Beth climaxed she tried to pull away, as if she could tolerate it no longer, but Maggie held her in place. She came, releasing a cry of satisfaction from deep within her being.

Maggie helped her down to the bed, where she lay in a spent heap. They rested quietly, each with their own thoughts, absently stroking each other. No one seemed to want to speak first until Lana spoke in her rich Quebecois accent.

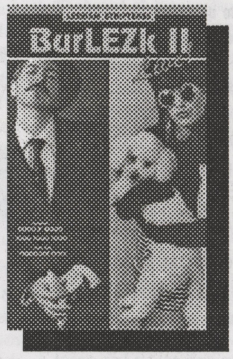
"I'm so glad there's two weeks left to my visit."

The laughter they shared announced a transformation for the couple, and Maggie wondered if Beth would invite more ex-lovers to visit as they fell into a deep sleep. ❖

FATALE
LESBIAN EROTIC VIDEOS

Lesbian Striptease

BURLEZK LIVE ! BURLEZK LIVE! II



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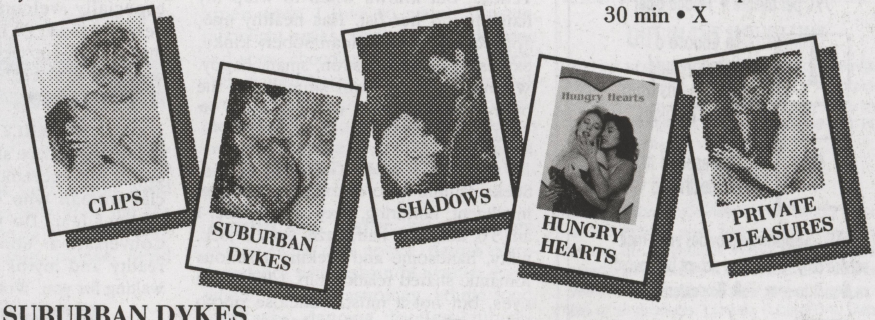

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Tina Wilson, Box K-1130, Knox, Galesburg, IL 61401, would like to hear from adult female survivors of child abuse (emotional, physical or sexual), for anthology of writings by and for women.

DOOMED RABBIT SEEKS RECIPES

Seattle's Leather community is assembling a collection of recipes for cookbook *Doomed Rabbit*, that will benefit Washington Citizen's for Fairness. Several food categories are open, as well as a "accoutrements" category for after dinner recipes (massage oil, etc.) For more info on how to submit recipes or help stamp out bigotry in Washington, send an SASE to The Cook Book Project, 1202 East Pike Street #565, Seattle, WA 98122-3934

LESBIAN AIDS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

is calling for submissions (300-500 words) of letters, memoirs, articles, essays, poetry or papers concerning your lives and experiences as HIV-positive lesbians, bisexual women and other women who partner with women. Send to: Lesbian AIDS Project, Gay Mens Health Crisis, 129 West 20th St, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10011.

SPINSTERS SEEKS MANUSCRIPTS

Spinsters Ink is currently seeking full-length novels and non-fiction works that deal with significant issues in women's lives from a feminist perspective. For guidelines contact Spinsters at P.O. Box 300170, Minneapolis, MN 55403-5170 (612)377-0287

LESBIAN BELLYDANCERS

Anyone knowing of where to get good bellydance videos, costumes, books, etc., please call. I would super appreciate it! ☎ 1111

SAFE SEX CALENDAR

Seeking queer women photographers and writers to share tastes and turn-ons by submitting their black and white photography, short prose & poetry for a 1995 calendar. Looking for art that eroticizes latex dams, gloves, toys and the many variations of hot safe sex between women. Calendar benefits the Santa Cruz AIDS Project. Safe Sex Calendar, c/o D. Wright, PO Box 557, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-0557. Deadline March 15, 1994.

SSA, SSI BENEFITS FOR HIV+ PERSONS

A Guide to Social Security and SSI Disability Benefits for People with HIV Infection is a recently updated brochure available through your local Social Security office or by calling 1-800-772-1213. Addresses many topics including eligibility requirements, how to file an application, Medicare and Medicaid. Available in Spanish. Calls are confidential.

INFORMATION ON LESBIAN PARENTING

The Lyon-Martin Women's Service's Center has been sponsoring programs on lesbians having children for over five years. They offer referrals, counseling, information and seminars of alternative insemination, adoption and co-parenting. For more information contact (415)565-7674.

LOOKING FOR CHILDREN OF LESBIANS

Tamar Gershon, a pediatrician and director of the Rainbow Clinic—the country's only pediatric clinic for children with lesbian or gay parents—is doing an extensive study on children with lesbian parents. Gershon is looking for children of all cultural backgrounds, ages 11-18, who have biological or adoptive lesbian parents. For more information, please call (415)476-1777.

OTHER NATIONAL RESOURCES

For legal referrals or information, networking or suppport referrals contact one of the following:

- ➤National Center for Lesbian Rights, 1663 Mission St. 5th Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103 or (415)621-0674
- ➤National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 1734 14th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009 or (202)332-6483

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LESBIAN TRANSSEXUAL

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"S/M" ACTIVITIES

SHOW ME HOW

I'm 31 GWF, from Philadelphia area, butch, 190 lbs, 5'2, shy but want to explore B/D with the right person. Need a femme to show me how. Help me live my fantasy of straping it on for you. Clean and sober only, please. Send photo. Mailbox-945

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seeks top with brain, heart and whip. Sans whip? May substitute cane, crop, bare hand or sound scolding. Me? 36, plentifully built, into Brahms and Beatles, Shakespeare and Spy, Broadway and Batman. My dogs live inside. No smokers. Long letters appreciated...944

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by "the most beautiful boy in the world," 5-8, 150, bleached blond flattop, devoted son, needs Daddy's guidance, his firm but loving hand. Out of role, I'm 35 y.o., dyke, college prof. Other games, especially gender play, OK. Intelligent, L.A. area only. ☎ 1068

SEEKING CORRESPONDENCE

GWF, 31, very feminine blond submissive, seeks correspondence with dominant women, other submissives. Meeting possible with right women, can travel for weekends, vacations. Interests: B & D, mild S & M. Promise frank, explicit letters, maybe more if compatible. No money involved. Will answer all. -954

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GEMINI, SAG. RISING, PISCES MOON

24, somewhat of a novice, desires correspondence with lesbian/bi women everywhere. I'm into astrology, ethnic food, tv/movies, dancing, foreign cultures, music (60's, blues, reggae, etc.), joyously contemplating the miracle of the universe, laughing. Write soon-hungry for friendship. Mailbox-957

SEEKS PENPALS

Young Asian-American, 23, new to gay scene, seeks friendship with others to share thoughts, ideas and interests. ☎ 959

SEEKING MONTANA COMPANIONS

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PUBLICATIONS

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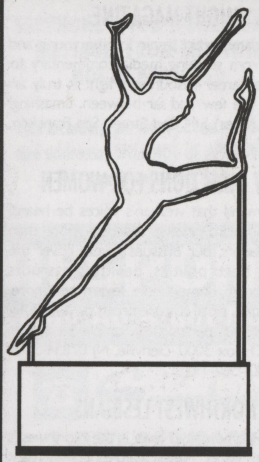

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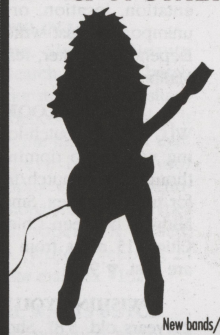

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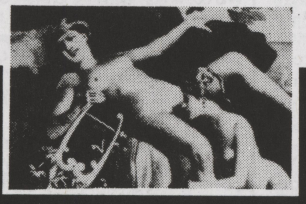

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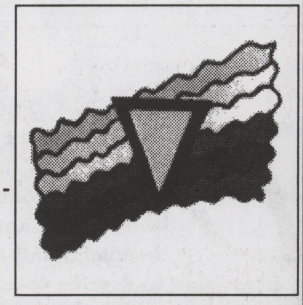

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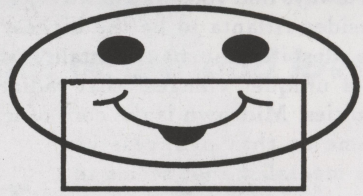

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On Our Backs' Sexual Travel Guide

ATLANTA

Down here in the heart of the Southland, the women of "Hotlanta" have traded in their bible belts for handcuffs, rollerblades and domestic partnership laws. Those antiquated southern ideals have long dissipated and all that is left of Margaret Mitchell is a street sign and some lovely flowers. Yeah, sodomy laws are strict in our state, and Sam Nunn is our overly self-righteous Representative, but he has become a butt of many a good joke, and despite him, Atlanta has evolved into a saliently gay, progressive, "new south" town. Best of all, Atlanta is a perpetual hub of homosexual activity. No matter what part of town you explore, you can always find your way into a circle of lesbian merriment.

I consider Atlanta to be the biggest little town in America because, despite its urban mentality, the city is actually comprised of unique "villages" that radiate their own individual personalities. **Midtown** is the core of lesbian and gay night life and home to that progressive hip-hop mentality that seems to permeate gay culture these days. Unfortunately, the majority of bars in this area are men's bars, but depending on what night you dare to show your colors, the opportunity to hook up with one of the girls is definitely favorable. A favorite midtown hot spot, **Blakes** (227 10th Street NE), is hip on Sunday nights for its old-time gospel hour, the ultimate in drag revival, drink swilling, hymnal, spiritual prayer frenzy. All the girls hang out upstairs on the patio to casually socialize, drink and have church. Remember, you have to sin to be saved!

The women of "Hotlanta" have traded in their bible belts for handcuffs, rollerblades and domestic partnership laws

More repentance lies within a five-block stroll at **Backstreet** (845 Peachtree Street), a 24-hour mixed disco with thundering loud music, toys and other miscellaneous goods. Backstreet definitely caters to that late-night party crowd, and make sure you bring your sunglasses.

Conveniently located in the center of midtown is **Piedmont Park**, the perfect place to relax on a sunny weekend day, bike, watch the girls play softball, or just catch rays on the hill on10th street. The park is always a casual place to meet women of all shapes and forms. Rollerblades are a must. If you happen to chance upon one of Atlanta's many arts or jazz festivals, you are likely to encounter a cross-section of lesbian demeanor; if not, you'll hear some great music and come back with some excellent pottery.

The only two "lesbian" bars in Atlanta are located in **Buckhead,** which is the yuppie part of town, filled mostly with pretentious heterosexual restaurants and watering holes. The ironically named **Revolution** (293 Pharr Rd.) offers diverse amusement for visiting single women, hosting a crowded disco, billiard area, many bars, a country two-step room, and a live acoustic music room that showcases local lesbian talent. Saturday night, or on cheap beer nights, this bar is an infusion of everyone from skinheaded dykes to young female executives. So whatever you're into, you're likely to meet your match.

The Otherside (1924 Piedmont Rd. NE) is the alternative to Revolution, more popular on Fridays or Wednesdays, their quintessential 25 cent beer night. It's a dyke institution for drinking a lot of beer and cruising women. You never know what can develop from a pocketful of quarters or a keen sense of unbridled raucousness. You will probably end up at the **Dunk'n'Dine** or the **Majestic** for late night munchies, surrounded by screaming gay men, women you met at the bar and transvestite waitresses. It's like a bad David Lynch movie.

The music scene in Atlanta is a strangely powerful subculture. The best place to see bands is **Little Five Points**, an ultra-diverse, hard-core, anything goes district. No lesbian bars, but Atlanta is such a lesbian and gay city, homosexual culture permeates all facets of city life. Get a nose ring, a pair of Doc Martens, write a few songs and "L5Ps" will captivate you. **The Point**, **The Starr Community Bar**, and **Masquerade** (home of Wednesday's Club Fetish) are jamming rock clubs, and show lots of local bands. Resembling an outside marketplace at times, L5Ps is filled with gay-owned and operated eateries, poets, photographers, artists and minstrels.

Nearby **Decatur,** GA, home of the Indigo Girls, has become a suburban lesbian haven. Some even refer to it as "dick-hater." When in this part of the city limits, be sure to visit **Eddies Attic** (515 North McDonough St.), the most popular acoustic music venue. When a trendy lesbian singer/guitar player is scheduled to perform, Eddies will be wall-to-wall fandykes, and "Do you play guitar?" is the most popular pick-up line. Frequented by the Indigo Girls and all the local songbirds, even Navratilova has been known to shoot pool here.

When the intellectual side of you rears its ugly head, find your way to **Charis** (1156 Euclid Ave.) in Little Five Points, the best place to find lesbian speakers and poets, book signings, socio-political chatter, cards and archetypal lesbian jewelry. **Outwrite Books** located on Monroe Drive, another hub of gay activity, is a wonderful bookstore to sit and discuss gender performativity over an espresso and cheesecake.

Atlanta is a constantly evolving and growing city, and has attracted a lot of recent national attention. With a substantial gay population, whichever environment you discover in this urban dykotomy you can be assured that you need never feel closeted here. A word of caution: stay away from Cobb County. ❖

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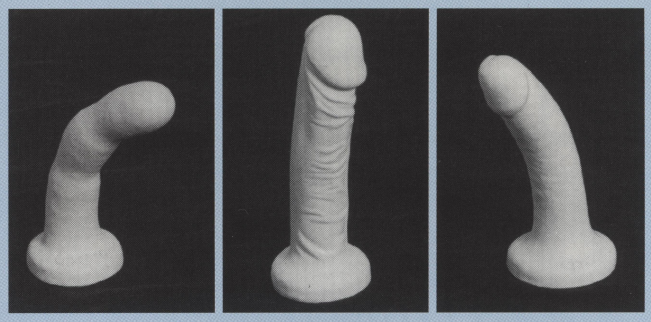

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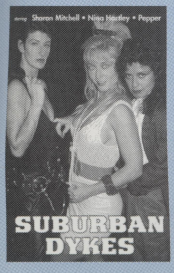

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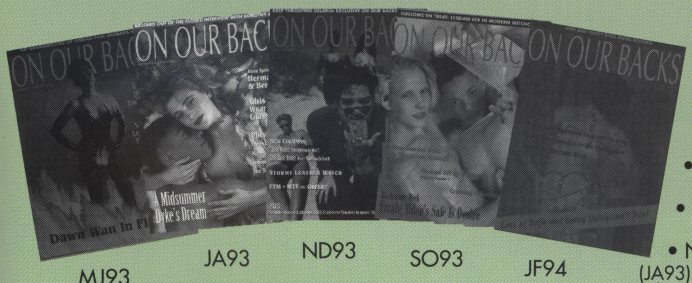

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